

STRAY THOUGHTS
FROM
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REV. R. S. MARTIN.

STRAY THOUGHTS

FROM A GOLDEN PEN.

INTENDED AS AN AID TO ALL RECENT CHRISTIAN CONVERTS.

BY

REV. R. S. MARTIN.

WITH AN APPENDIX CONTAINING THE GENERAL RULES
OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

*17
1740*
AND INTRODUCTION BY

REV. C. C. McCABE, D. D.,

NEW YORK.

"Amicus fidelus medicamentum vitae."

A faithful friend is the medicine of life.

CHICAGO:
DONOHUE & HENNEBERRY
1890.



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BY REV. R. S. MARTIN.

DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF MY BOYHOOD FRIEND,

ELISHA W. CASE, ESQ.,

OF

CHICAGO, ILL.

He who in my youthful days led me to the Lord.

R. S. M.

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INTRODUCTION.

“Stray thoughts” like stray shots often do great execution. The destiny of a soul has sometimes been decided by an aptly quoted text, a verse of an almost forgotten hymn, or some powerful sentence freighted with eternal truth falling upon the listening ear, as the very message of the Lord from an unseen world.

Three prodigals were once sitting at a gambling table, absorbed in their game. The fourth member of the party, while pondering which card to play next, unconsciously began humming Miss Cary’s beautiful hymn :

“ One sweetly solemn thought
 Comes to me o’er and o’er,
I’m nearer my home to-day
 Than I ever have been before.”

The game was spoiled ; the voice of God was heard ; holy memories of the past were awakened ; three lives were changed from that hour ; there was joy in the presence of the angels !

The history of the church is full of such instances.

This little book will tend to awaken the careless, to strengthen the weak, to comfort the sorrowful, to arouse Christians to do their best for God and His church. It will make a useful present for young converts. Successful pastors will be quick to appreciate it. It should be kept close at hand and each morning a thought lodged in the memory of the reader, never more to "stray," but to abide forever.

Long life and a wide circulation to "Stray
Thoughts from a Golden Pen."

AUTHOR'S APOLOGY.

I can give but one reason why this volume has ever reached the public eye, and that is, in my pastoral and evangelistic services there has seemed a *necessity* for something of this character to be placed *immediately* in the hand and home of each convert as an aiding counselor, in what is to them the *Beginning of Years*.

How much depends on a right beginning! These pages are written to help all such beginners in the *divine life*! Those whose feet, now, for the first time, tread the borders of the spiritual Canaan, and whose lips even now taste the spiritual grape-clusters of the promised land.

Dr. Arnold, of "Rugby fame," says: "There should be but three objects of human ambition: 1st. To be prime-minister of a great kingdom. 2d. To be governor of a great empire, and, 3d. To write books which *live in every age and among every people*." In this volume I have attempted nothing so

elaborate or exhaustive, nor have I presumed that any of *these writings will live in every age, and among all people.*

Rather have I sought only to be a “helper in Christ,” and as such, have offered this small contribution to the forces already at work, for the Christianization of the world. Even as one passes through the conservatories of earth, there plucks the brightest, most fragrant and beautiful flowers, then ties them with a *golden thread*, so have I gathered here and there, from others’ gardens, some rare buds of thought, which I have *tied in with my own.*

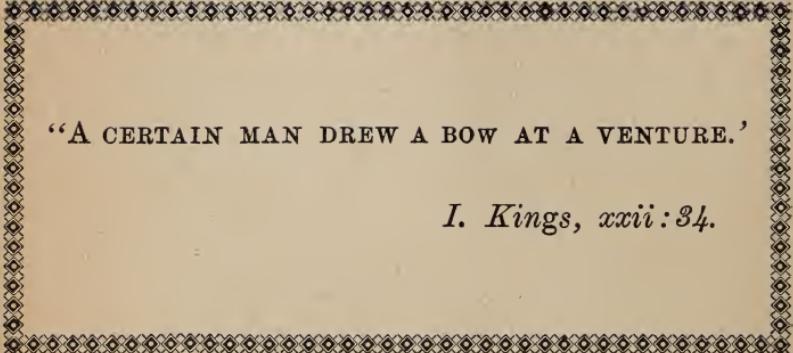
Thus have I tried to cultivate, collect and twine together, a *bouquet of helpful Christian ideas*, the fragrance of which I pray may live *always* in the brain, life and character of each reader. I assure each impartial reader that it will furnish me an *abundant reward*, should I learn at any time in the future that these “Stray Thoughts” had assisted Christian beginners to solve some of the problems of life, and more completely fulfill the duties of the age in which they live.

If any one is inclined to criticise the contents, arrangement or design of this volume, I shall console myself with the statement of wise and sympathetic Ralph Waldo Emerson, in which he declares, "The worst poem is better than the best criticism of it." My prayer is that the thoughts here written may like the "golden arrow of Ascestes," fly straight to the mark; kindle as they fly; and burn as they kindle, in the soul of every reader, to whom they may come!

In conclusion, we say to others what others have said to us :

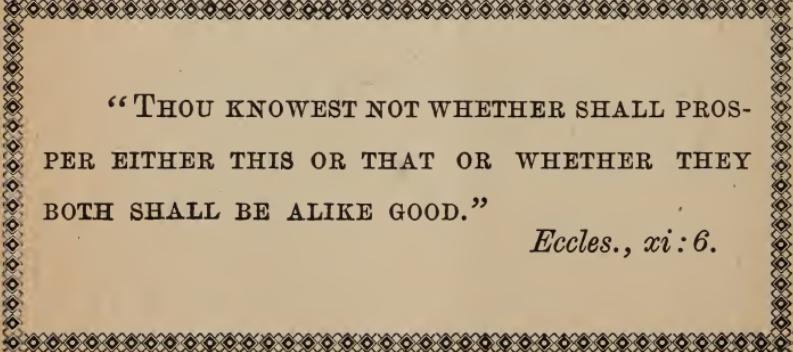
Who gives the world a noble thought,
And writes it out in prose or rhyme,
May furnish for some lowly soul
A stepping-stone on which to climb.

Then send your noblest thoughts abroad,
Nor idly wait some higher call.
Give to humanity and God
Your best: Nor deem the gift too small.



“A CERTAIN MAN DREW A BOW AT A VENTURE.”

I. Kings, xxii:34.



“THOU KNOWEST NOT WHETHER SHALL PROSPER EITHER THIS OR THAT OR WHETHER THEY BOTH SHALL BE ALIKE GOOD.”

Eccles., xi:6.

STRAY THOUGHTS.

All these are but stray thoughts, caught in their flight,
Or way-marks from one golden pen;
Yet I would, if I could, in eternal light,
Trace them all on the hearts of men.

Re-write them! O, God! for man's thoughts are dead,
Save as they are quickened by Thee;
Yet in past, by Thy good spirit touched, they have sped
As light bearing seraphs o'er islet and sea.

We commend them to Thee—naught else can we do;
For, once written, we would not recall.
Though "a lad's loaves and fishes" for so many seem few,
In Thy hand they break plenty for all.

They are written—Lord bless! may they never return
To the author's heart in vain;
But in souls of men may they kindle—yea, burn!—
Into Godward aspiring flame.

As drops in the ocean, or mites in the chest;
As sand-grains in tall mounts unseen;
Like stray beams of sunlight, adown in the west,
May they help to make brighter life's dream.

Stray thoughts! fast they came in the hour of joys;
Or, mayhap, when soul-crushed and distressed,
On prayer-wings love sends them, as heavenly buoys,
Trusting through them *God's sons* may be blessed.

The bow has been sprung—the arrows are fled—
They will stop—only God knoweth where;
And the venture thus made, may it cheer when I'm dead!
As a sweet song, breathed out on the air.

WHAT E'ER THOU ART THY VALUE WILL APPEAR;
IF THOU ART BAD, NO PRAISE WILL BUOY THEE UP;
IF THOU ART GOOD, NO CENSURE WEIGH THEE
DOWN.

AND THE DISCIPLES WERE CALLED CHRIST-
IANS FIRST IN ANTIOCH.

Acts, xi:26.

A CHRISTIAN.

He, and he only, is the world's *true sovereign*, who has in heart and life Christianity fully developed! A Christian! This, in its perfected state is the title of true nobility! Compared with it all earthly titles are but assumed nothings. King, Queen, President, Prince and Czar may each indicate *Position*, but to be worthily titled "a Christian" indicates *Condition*, and is, therefore, of all others the superior.

To have it said by onlookers and enemies, as was said of Daniel, "He is a man in whom is the spirit of the Holy Gods," is infinitely to be preferred to the sham titles of mock royalty given to purple-clad kings sitting and sinning on the thrones of earth. Not unfrequently does history portray in awful light the many crowns and coronets under which have been troubled heads and aching hearts. It has pointed to scepters held in the hands of rulers, who, while controlling others, were themselves the veriest *slaves of sin*.

How vastly superior the crown and scepter of the Christian! They touch a hand and press a brow bold in the strength of purity, calm in the peace of Heaven.

The wearer, glories in them and the giver, while the world in general gazes in admiration upon this moral hero, who by God's grace has vanquished sin, and thus become heir-apparent of the upper throne, which is in reserve, and awaits the coming of this triumphant disciple, who only, in truth, is *the world's conqueror*.

To be worthily called "A Christian," is the highest ambition of the noblest, purest soul—higher than this we need not soar; with less than this we should never be content. To be a Christian is more than to have merely attained the world's standard of morality. It is something higher, deeper and far more full of meaning. It is that divine life in the soul which reaches up to heaven, and down to the depths of man's inner self.

It is a recreation which beautifully manifests its presence and power in the transformed thought,

life and character of the individual. It is the result, not alone of *reformation*, but of *regeneration*. It is not satisfied with merely "a new leaf being turned over," it requires an *entire new book*.

True Christianity! It not only says reform, but, in thunder peals, cries out *Repent!* It requires not only that we *do* better, but that we *be* better, and thus, by its clear, ringing statements of rich, spiritual truth, excels all other theories for reforming and elevating mankind.

It never attempts to smother the wrong by an elaborate patchwork of good deeds. It is an entirely new force in the soul, a force which gives the possessors the right to be called "New creatures in Christ." It neither attempts to disguise or odorize what ought to be destroyed at once and forever by fire from off God's altar.

Among chemists there are two forces utilized. One is technically termed an *odorament*, the other a *disinfectant*. The former is used to *overpower*, or *disguise* disagreeable and unhealthy odors, the latter is an aromatic preparation used to *destroy* disagree-

able odors: One *disguises*, the other *destroys*! A Christ life is the result of applied heavenly disinfectants. Not merely a disguising of the disagreeable odors of past sinful life, but a cleansing, washing, purifying of the soul, and a destroying of the blotted record of the past. Yes! more, it is the bringing back of the spiritual nature of man to the image of God, in which he was originally created!

It is the in-putting of holy energies and sublime aspirations! It is the out-burning of heaven-kindled fires! It is the outward working of heaven-sent and soul-filling forces, which lift the possessor above himself and his surroundings, and make his character sublime, attractive and trustworthy!

In a recent sermon, eloquent and impressive, by a leading and learned Bishop, the value of such a character and its influence in critical hours, was most strikingly portrayed, as he described how one such character, though but youthful and incomplete, turned the federal troops from their intended march, which could have resulted only in defeat, and swung them into lines of victory! Said he: "During the war,

General Lee and his officers met on one of the streets of Chambersburg, Pa., and, after careful consultation, decided to change their course and march to Gettysburg instead of Harrisburg toward which they had been marching. A farmer's boy, a christian lad, from the second-story window, overlooking the soldier-scene below, heard the conversation.

Quickly and carefully the lad followed them to see that they took the line of march decided upon, and, when he was certain of their design, he rapidly hurried to the nearest telegraph office, and dispatched the following news to Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania: "Lee with his troops has gone to Gettysburg." The electric flash flew over the wire. The despatch was received, torn open, and read; and immediately the boy was sent for, and brought to the Governor by a special engine which traveled at the rate of sixty-five miles an hour! Hastily was the lad brought in to the private quarters of the Governor to be questioned by him and his staff. To every enquiry, however critical and searching, he gave the same unvarnished answers! The Governor

knew that if his statements were true it was the most important news that could be received! Upon its truthfulness depended the safety of the state, and perhaps, of the nation! Greatly excited, the Governor turned aside for a moment and said, in a perplexed undertone, to his staff, "I would give my right hand to *Know* that this lad tells the truth." Just then a soldier standing near stepped up and said, "Governor, I know that boy! I lived for years in his neighborhood, and I know it is absolutely impossible for him to tell a lie! He is a christian boy, and there is not a drop of false blood in his veins!!

That was enough! In five minutes the news was telegraphed to headquarters, and in fifteen minutes the Union troops were pushing on to Gettysburg, where was fought one of the most decisive battles of the late Civil war. Ah! It was the unsullied, honest, well-known character, of the noble Christian lad that turned the troops of the Union into the victorious battle-field of Gettysburg, which gave them lasting glory. Thus is it always, and every-

where. Christian character is the core upon which the world turns. It is the pivot of destiny. Reputation may be but the heated breath of public opinion, but *character is the verdict of the eternal Judge.* This is the jewel that blazes only on the brow of true royalty.

In every true Christian experience there is just such a rich, deep, bedrock life to be lived. A life which is not frothy, superficial or shallow, but which touches the very depths of being, and thus makes every true possessor "A crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of his God." In the christianization of souls, there is a double purpose: first, to "redeem from all iniquity," and second, to "purify unto himself a peculiar people, *zealous of good works.*" And this *zeal* for others should flame up into a constant and burning activity.

No Christian life terminates in itself. It is a living active force, producing needed results. It not only *gets* good for itself, but, like a summer cloud, gathers, that it may give again. A true Christian life

never was, it never can be, inactive. It will always be producing impressions and effecting results in the life and character of every observant associate.

It will be ever manifesting that which is the direct outgrowth of inner graces. The outburstings of divinely kindled flames burning in the souls of men. It is incessantly proving to the race of man the possibility of bringing the soul and body of man into their proper and God-designed relations to each other. It infuses into the souls of men a force which gives them moral dignity, and leads the *soul* to assert its right over, and control of, the *body*. Like the youthful Damascus-road convert, every young Christian should rise up into new and higher realms of manhood and womanhood, and declare as emphatically as he did, "I keep my body under." Such was the noble declaration of Paul.

When the more than noonday glory light fell upon and around him, and the scales dropped from off his zealous Jewish eyes, he resolved that the true man, the *ego*, should be master of the mere habitation, the *body*. The *body* is one thing, the *man*,

the living soul, the immortal within, is quite another.

Reason alone tells us that the watch *works* are more valuable, and far more important than the *case* in which they are enclosed. But reason and inspiration combine to tell us that the *soul* is greater and far more noble than the body.

The newborn soul catches this glimpse of its God-created greatness, and, asserting its right to rule, it struggles as a bird in the fowler's net till it frees itself, then rises up and away into heights of moral grandeur to the summits of which, hitherto, it seemed impossible to advance. A Christian life means self-acquaintance, acquaintance with God, with Christ, with the Holy Spirit; with the great code of ethics written down in the book of God. It means all this and more.

As says Mendenhall in his comparison of "Paul and Plato": "An intellectual acquaintance with its truths or with itself as a system of truths, and a belief in them was all that religion required until Christianity appeared, which, in addition thereto, required a

spiritual apprehension of its truths and a *special experience of their meaning and power.*"

Conversion according to Christianity, is not merely an intellectual change, or a change of belief, or a change of sentiment, or a change of truths. *Important as such change is, and involved in conversion as it is, it is not conversion itself, nor may conversion be defined, merely, as a change of relations to religion, for while such change is a condition, it is not the essence of religious life.*

Regeneration involving external conduct and individual relations, is *richer* in its spiritual import, and more comprehensive in its spiritual range. It has reference to a new life in man. It is an organic spiritual life, that did not previously exist. So great is the change in character, that when it occurs it equals *a new birth* and is divinely so described. The man is new; New in his sentiments; New in his faith; New in his external relations; New in his intellectual apprehensions; New in his spiritual life! Indeed! Language can not adequately portray the change, it can only declare that it has taken place.

Such is the change Christianity requires in its subjects, and such, too, is the change recognized in thousands of the converts who are now finding their way into the visible church of Christ.

But how is this change, so marvelous, and with so many, brought about? It is because a new force has entered the soul; a force which none can conceive or comprehend, save those who accept the Savior, and even they can not fully explain all they joyfully experience! To them and them only is it given to "Know the mysteries of the Kingdom."

In one of Goethe's beautiful fairy tales, he tells of a wonderful silver lamp, which, when hung up in the fisherman's rude hut, changed the cabin and all within it to silver. So, this gospel of Christ, admitted to the human heart, changes, alters, it into moral beauty—transforming its selfishness, hardness, cruelty, and inhumanity, to love, gentleness, kindness, sweetness, ministry. It is a force which finds its way into the hearts of mortals, and works out through the hard crust of their lives, until they are *reformed*, and built up into the sublime tempers and dispositions of Christ.

In the city of Rome, there is one bronze statue, and in our "National Capitol, Washington" there is another, each of which stand out preëminent, and always attractive to travelers. The former represents "Luther" during the reformation, breaking the Papal chains from off a myriad priest-directed souls. The other memorializes "Lincoln" stooping to loose the chains of the suppliant southern slave! Tears of joyous gratitude have fallen at the foot of each statue as there stood gazing up on those bronze representations, the persons who have been delivered by the *faith-preaching* of the one, and the *pen-marked emancipation proclamation* of the other. Their lives were useful, their memories sacred, and a mere shadowy bronze representation was enough to evoke from the delivered ones, tears of thankfulness and words of highest praise.

True, we may not all be "Luthers," thundering the faith-creed in the ears of mankind, and arousing the world with ringing notes of gospel alarm; nor, can we all be "Lincolns," liberating our dark-hued brother-in-bonds, but every Christian may, nay,

should be, a reformer, a liberator, in the sense of remoulding and refashioning the thoughts and lives of others, and breaking the sin-shackles from the souls of men! Such is the new line of life and work to which you have so recently offered yourself in public consecration; and this new life will be beautiful, useful and satisfactory, just in proportion as your Christian character is acceptable to God and yourself. I say "*yourself*," because the highway of a Christian life, though straight and narrow, is so plain, that we, ourselves, are immediately conscious of wrong when we retreat or deflect to the right or left in the slightest instance, or fail in the performance of even the minor duties of life. Therefore, be honest with thy God! Be honest with the world! Be honest with thyself! "Keep thyself pure," for *purity is power!* All are cognizant of these self-evident truths; but, alas! there are those who,

"E'en in penance, seem
Planning sins anew."

And to such vacillating, and pledge-breaking souls, with the purity vow still fresh upon their lips, comes a

new, or an old temptation, with a force they never dreamed it had ! Comes, and, comes to ruin, and leave in bitterness, every *guileful* soul, for such are sure to be ensnared.

This way, to you, may appear new and almost untrodden, with only an occasional and infrequent traveler ; but, young convert, the newness of the line of march is only *apparent*, not *real*, for it is the *old* path on which a long list of worthies has gone before you, with Christ in the van, leading the vast procession. Yea, every inch of this divinely illuminated pathway is holy ground, for it has been consecrated by a host of the noblest, purest names the world has ever known ; names of which the world is not worthy.

All along this line has been witnessed the most heroic self-denial and suffering ! The most beautiful, wise and intense earnestness ! The largest and most unselfish liberality, and the most complete and triumphant victories of which historic page has any record ! And this great cloud of glorified, unseen and princely witnesses encompass and encamp round

about you, and eagerly crowd on either side your race-way to the celestial city, and ever and anon amid their joyous acclamations of triumph, they turn to cheer you with their comfort songs, breathed out upon the air, bidding you by a thousand sympathetic cords of love, COME ON! COME ON!! COME ON!!!

“GO! YE INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH
THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE.”

Jesus.

EVERY DUTY WE OMIT OBSCURES SOME TRUTH
WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.

BUT THE LORD SAID UNTO ME, “SAY NOT
I AM A CHILD, FOR THOU SHALT GO TO ALL
THAT I SHALL SEND THEE AND WHATSOEVER I
COMMAND THOU SHALT SPEAK.”

Jer., i:7.

THE CONVERT'S COMMISSION, GO!

Go! New-born souls! all royal priests!

More; Sons of the living God!

Bid all mankind to the upper feasts

Ere they're silent 'neath the sod.

Go! Bear to thy brother, e'en as borne to thee

God's truth; that grand message of power

Then, like thee, shall he, be also made free

And rejoice in the Lord's pardoning hour.

Go! Shed the light of a saintly soul

Out-fling thee a myriad rays,

Which, shall wave-like ever, and ever on-roll

Through uncounted and oncoming days.

Go! Sprinkle the salt of a Savior's grace

That long since did reach thine heart,

As a saving force in the world, take a place

And faithfully do thy part.

Go! Scatter the scents of a godly life

O'er all the wide, wide, earth,

And sweeten the hearts, long bittered with strife

Who've had naught but grief from birth.

Go! Thou in thy might, in the strength of God.

Rest not till thy work is done,

Tread thou in the path thy Lord hath trod

Then, forever, shine on! as the sun.

“THIS MOTTO TO ALL, WHEN I AM DEAD,
BE SURE YOU'RE RIGHT, THEN GO AHEAD.”

Crockett.

“A GOOD BEGINNING IS A BATTLE HALF
WON, THE OTHER HALF OF WHICH WILL BE BUT
A PLAY-SPELL.”

Gen. Gordon.

A GOOD BEGINNING.

In Christ's inaugural address or what is commonly called the sermon on the mount, two builders are held up in contrast: One is called a wise, the other a foolish man. The terms are applied, not because of the different houses built, for, the super-structure may have been similar in design, material and workmanship, but, the distinction was made because one had a *good* and the other a *bad beginning*. One a rock, and the other, a sand foundation upon which the upper structure was erected.

Thus, by parabolic teaching, the gathered multitudes who listened, learned from the Christ-lips the vast importance of substantial basal supports. He seemed to be ever crowding this upon the minds of His auditors as the first great necessity of a successful life.

God's ample provision of a safe and sufficient base, has been the burden of prophecy, the song of

the Psalms and the very soul of the inspired writings. Seven hundred years prior to the advent of Christ, Isaiah struck his prophetic harp and sang divinely in the nation's ears "Behold! saith the Lord, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation."

David, the royal singer of Israel's throne found in the world everywhere, a trembling base and great uncertainty. Oft had his feet been fast in the mire, and, soul sunk as he lingered, if but a moment, on the quick-sands of earth's strongest supported systems, but fully appreciating the stability of the age-rock upon which his feet had been so lately and firmly set, he sings aloud, "If *this* foundation be destroyed what can the righteous do?"

So, too, Paul, the gospel pioneer to the gentiles, enforced with inspired letter this same fact when he declared, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, even Jesus Christ," and every resident of Corinth to whom he wrote, caught his full meaning and quickly learned a *truth-spiritual* from a *fact-natural*, for they knew that for years their hillsides

had been rifled of their tri-deep, magnificent, marbled rocks, Ionian, *Æ*gean, Corinthian, any of which, for the purposes of under-solidity, were in all the world unexcelled. Indeed, their pride and boasting were in buildings of beauty resting upon foundations as solid as the superstructures were superb. By them, too, the Pauline idea was quickly grasped when again he said, "As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation, therefore, let every man take heed *how* he buildeth thereupon; gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, for if a man's work *abide* which he hath built when the fire flame of Judgment shall burn and reveal what *sort* it is he shall receive a reward." Paul's idea was, *Christ our foundation, first! last! and forever!!*

Beginning on this foundation, young convert, you can build up a stalwart christian character that shall stand four-square to all the winds of heaven and defy every storm. Yes, even the non-spiritual, unholy and demonized attacks of the enemy!

God; Christ; Spirit; Heaven; Immortality; all these are new forces which have recently entered

thy soul by the avenues of preaching, holy living, and spiritual song. Under their inspiration you have rock-planted your feet, poised your soul, and plumed its wings preparatory to an upward, heavenward flight. You have solemnly said, "I am no longer content to dwell in caves lit up only by the feeble torch-lights of the senses! Hereafter I shall follow and walk in the light of, not these alone, but in the work, way, and word, of God."

Good! Such vows are heaven-recorded. Such vows are heaven pleasing. They are an index to your future life, for thus has God looked upon them, and in view of your vows he has already commissioned and sent forth those "twin sisters, goodness and mercy" to follow you, if you continue to follow Him, all the days of your life.

Your starting steps are worthy and will receive the plaudits of good men everywhere; but brilliant as may be the "beginning" do not err in thinking that the beginning is *all*. Do not canopy-cover the foundation, and live forever there, for, the super-structure, the top stories of your experience, must be

upbuilt, until tower, minaret and dome, yea ! all the upper spiritual edifice shall gleam and glisten under the rays of Heaven's touch. Yes, gleam like myriad pearls under the sun-touch of the eternal throne.

It is the design of God not that you be forever relaying the foundation, but that you leave the beginning principles of the doctrine of Christ, and "go on unto perfection." Christian perfection, which alone can lead you up to the summits of the transfigured glory heights, and which, if you so choose, will leave you not till you reach the jeweled throne of Heaven. Move onward ! Move upward ! Move Godward !! *Do your best, and never rest satisfied until your best is done ; and while you are doing your best, study the better that others have done before you.* Such are the words inscribed over the portals of "De Pauw Art Halls," and the inspiring thought wrapped up in the folds of this silent sentence should be spirit-traced in the mind of every beginner in the divine life. Oh ! Young Convert ! *Be now, do now, all that you shall have wished you had been, and done, in the years that are yet to*

come ! What you are now, determines largely what you will be in the future, for as the roots of the present lie deep in the past, so the fruit of the future will be as the root of to-day.

As we plant the seed in the spring-time, but fill not our garners till the autumn come ; as we strike deep the rootlets of the tender tree, cover them, and then wait years for the fullness of the fruit ; so the grandeur of your new-begun Christian-life, does not, meteor-like, hurl itself, with all its maximum-splendors, at *once*, and *immediately* upon the world's eye, but, sun-like, gradually rises to its meridian, where it loses its sun-likeness, for instead of dimming and declining at noon-tide it soars up-and-away, flooding with light the universe of man as it ascends to meet its God.

Keep ever in memory that your present actions, in a large degree, determine your future character and rewards, for, it is written in letters more lasting than could be formed by brilliant stars upon the midnight sky “Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.” Yes ! and the same unalterable truth is

given in other words, modernized, but, perhaps, not improved: which declares

The issues of the life to be
We weave with colors all our own
And in the fields of destiny
We reap as we have sown.

Convert of Christ! forever remember that a real, substantial, Christian life is not a thing of mushroom growth, requiring only a few hours to reach maturity. It is rather the result of God's up-lifting, and the reward of man's up-reaching, during all his days, weeks, months, and years! Yes! A beautifully symmetrical, and, sterling Christian character, is a fruit which it costs all the years of a man's life to form, ripen, and bring to perfection! Young Christian beginner! You are on the royal-road that leads to such an ultimate outcome, and, prospectively you are the victor, for, you seek and you have true religious principle, which has ever proven itself to be the best weapon for the conflicts of the present life, and the only hope-inspirer of the life that is to be. Build deep. Build broad. Build High. And in all

thy building, trust not yourself, nor in your own work, but, in God who is thy sure support.

In the world there are many light-houses, but we grant that the most famous, and well-known, is the "Eddystone" on the Cornwall coast of England. Three times, it has been built. Twice to perish with its boastful builders, but, finally to stand because founded on the thought of God.

The learned and eccentric "Winstanley" who first built it was very proud of his workmanship, as seen in this structure, and, from the lofty balcony, boldly defied the sea-storms, calling aloud, and saying, "Blow Winds ! Rise, O Ocean ! Break forth ! ye elements ! and, try my work !" This he did many times, but, one fearful night of storm and tempest, tower and builder, sank together in the sea, and were but wrecks upon the water-waves.

Then, "Rudgard" reconstructed it of wood and stone. Its size and shape were perfect, but the material used gave hold to the elements, so, that, one careless act wrapped the structure in sheets of fire, and together at last, building and builder, perished in the flames.

Finally "Smeaton" the noble, Christian mechanic, was asked to rebuild it again, and from the solid sea-rock-base, he raised a cone, which he riveted to the oak-covered-rocks, even, as the oak is fastened to the earth by its roots. Upon such a foundation he raised a structure, upon which he carved no boastful inscription, but, on whose lowest rock-course, he chiseled deep these words, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it," and, on its key-stone, above the central and largest light, this trustful tribute, "Laus Deo," "Praise God," and, to this day "Eddystone" light-house is standing, with uplifted and out-flashing beacon-lights, a blessing to every storm-tossed, tempest-driven mariner along its billow-beaten strand.

O! Young convert! Look well to the foundation upon which you build. Let the rootlets of your faith strike deep into the bleeding but tender-loving heart of Jesus. Let your confidence begin there, then, build thou up to Heaven.

In conclusion, I would if possible trace in your memory and carve upon your heart, the eloquent and

significant words, with which, more than fifty years ago, "Leonard Bacon" closed an address to a class of young converts. These were his burning words, "Would to God I could make you know what results are depending upon you! What interests of the church and of a dying world are involved in your present 'beginning,' as well as your future character and efforts!" When I look at the young Christians of this age and reflect, that, they are soon to sustain the ancient glories of the church of God! When I look abroad upon the earth and see the crisis that is just at hand! When I listen to the cries that come from every quarter of the world, summoning the people of God to new effort, and more splendid exhibitions of piety! I seem to see the olden generation of the past, rising up from their repose, to watch over these new followers of Christ! I seem to hear the voices of the blessed spirits from above, cheering them on in their career of piety! I seem to see a world of misery turning its imploring hands to them, and beseeching them to be worthy of their privileges; worthy of their noble destiny! I seem to hear, nay!

I do hear, God himself speaking from the heavens saying “Ye have chosen the better part, yours is a ‘*good beginning.*’ Be now and ever, ‘faithful unto death and I will give the a crown of life !’ ”

WASTED MOMENTS SEND US INTO ETERNITY
FULL OF SORROW AND REGRET.

WHATEVER THY HAND FINDETH TO DO, Do
IT WITH THY MIGHT, FOR THERE IS NO WORK;
NOR DEVICE; NOR KNOWLEDGE; NOR WISDOM; IN
THE GRAVE WHITHER THOU GOEST.

Eccles., ix: 10

NOTHING TO DO.

“ Nothing to do ! ” are the words we hear,
Alas ! from too many, each day ;
And the false words ring in the Christian’s ear
As he turns in sorrow away.
For he knows how “ white the fields ” are
And how ready the harvest, too !
Oh ! It gives him grief most poignant, deep,
To hear the words “ Nothing to do ! ”

Nothing to do ! Have we hearts of steel ?
Our eyes are they doubly closed ;
Are there none in sickness we can heal,
None for whom sympathy flows ?
In this their time of deepest distress,
When with anguish their hearts are riven,
Arise ! in God’s glory and brightness,
And tell them, O tell them of Heaven.

“ The poor ye have always with you,”
Were the words of the Master, then ;
Though ages have passed and many have died,
There are still many poor among men.
Let us look in these homes of the needy,
Then, to God and our conscience be true,
And the words will not linger more on our lips,
“ There is nothing for me to do ! ”

There are children to lead to the Bible-school,
In whose homes pure joys never dwell ;
They need some words of kindness,
They are waiting for you to tell

Of a better Way ! and Life ! and Home !
Yes ! Wait in their sadness for you ;
O ! Lose no more time, Christian brother,
In declaring " There is nothing to do ! "

The withering-blight of a brazen sin
Is cursing our broad, fair, land ;
There is needed some power to check it,
It needs your heart, your hand
To seize this mighty monster, " Drink,"
Which imperils even you !
O ! God ! while this demon still is loose,
Shall we say " There is nothing to do ? "

" Nothing to do ! You may say it, when
The world 's at the Master's feet,
And royally-robed in his garments of light
The " ancient of days " takes his seat.
When all nations of earth, His scepter obey
And hand, heart, and life, give him, too !
Then, may you truly, but not till then, say
" There is nothing that I can do ! "

THE BEST AND NOBLEST LIVES ARE THOSE WHICH ARE SET TOWARD HIGH IDEALS, AND THE HIGHEST AND NOBLEST IDEAL THAT ANY MAN CAN HAVE IS, JESUS OF NAZERETH.

“Almera.”

AS WE BECOME LIKE THOSE WITH WHOM WE ASSOCIATE, SO THE MORE WE ARE IN CHRIST'S COMPANY IN STUDY, THOUGHT, PRAYER, AND WISH, THE MORE WILL WE BECOME LIKE HIM.

AIMING HIGH.

The sweep of centuries has not erased the Pauline injunction "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." The mind, the disposition, the general characteristics of Christ, his life retraced in our life; this, is the Alpine height which we are called to ascend! To attain a full reflection of the mind of Christ is ambition-angelic! higher than this even seraphs can not soar! Young converts! your task is a great one, but, your possibilities are also great.

It is impossible for you *now* to conceive the above-cloud summits to which you may yet rise. Your present ideal height may be your future valley-lands, for, as you near the light of the throne eternal, God reveals ever-ascending and up-piling peaks of perfection, which, hitherto, had been undiscovered, unknown, and hence by you unsought. In the realm of spiritual truth and moral perfection, there are

always, and ever will be, “More worlds to conquer!” One high attainment in the life-divine will make possible one higher, and that another, and thus we may ascend; conquer; capture; and keep; all the heights of Christian possibility. While it is a task more than gigantic to become, *all at once*, “perfect even as your father who is in heaven is perfect,” yet, one may by true consecration, earnest thought, purpose, and prayer, become much better than he now is, for, this “battle is the Lord’s,” the final issues of which are to be as you by life and effort shall direct. As a very small obstruction sometimes turns the course of a rill-stream, and by its windings and deflectings loses its usefulness; and sometimes its separate existence, so, a very little wrong thing may alter the upward course of thy life, turn thee to the right hand or left, and eventually destroy thy usefulness if not thy spiritual life entire. As “it is the little foxes that spoil the vines” so, it is the little deeds of thy life which tear down, or, build up thy Christian character, and cause it to be dwarfed and misshapen, or, strong, influential, and satisfactory.

A massive, beautiful edifice, must first have a foundation deep, broad, and substantial, then may it rise to perfection and completeness, by properly placing rock upon rock, and, binding each to the other, and each to all with cleaving chains of cement! So, may a character rise in all its attractiveness and beauty, which has Christ for its foundation, the Apostles as corner-stones, and a myriad, words, ways and little deeds, each one a rock in this newer, holier, temple of the Lord, each cemented to each and each to all by the binding cement of Calvary's blood-flow! God notices these little deeds and beautifies the life in keeping with them.

For, after all, a Christian life is as a chain, the longest of which is but a union of links, or as a journey, the longest of which is but a succession of steps! and as the last link in the longest chain may be eventually reached by a hand-over-hand movement, and the last step in the longest journey be taken by a continual plodding, so, thy character by a proper attention to life's *little duties*, will be built up, and rounded out, in most perfect symmetry.

Do not neglect the smaller duties of a religious life. In the mind of God every thing has value ! for to all appearances he seems on the morning of creation to have made a leaf, or an atom, with as much care, as if he were creating a world. He polished the scaly coat of the smallest insect with as much interest as if he were feathering the wing of a cloud-cleaving eagle. *God notices and records little things !*

True, the planting of an acorn is not much in itself, yet, if it is given time sufficient it will become a forest which shall shake like Lebanon. A mustard-seed of itself seems nothing, but under the *touch of God*, it rises, ascends and ever grows till it becomes a wide spreading tree in whose branches and under whose shadows the fowls of Heaven lodge.

The leaven by itself is valueless but when placed in the meal it leavens, labors, and works, until the whole is like itself. The “stone cut of the mountain without hands” was very small, and to all human appearances as powerless a thing as the stones of the valley at the mountain foot, but, started by the enginery of the upper world it rolled

along and ever downward till lo ! it filled the valley in its flight.

The acorn, leaven, mustard-seed, and mountain-rock, all alike worked slowly, perhaps unseen, yet they ever and always worked, and, thus eventually gave to the world dense-forests, refreshing-shades, firm-rocks, and leavened-blessings. The avalanche ! what can withstand its movements ?

The world trembles under its terrific tread ; yet how slow its pace ! so slow as to be imperceptible to the casual and careless observer. Indeed ! it is said of " Agazziz " who was born and reared amid the Alps, of Switzerland that, even he, could not tell when the avalanche moved except as he made marks to test it, yet it *did* move, and in its final movement carried everything in its track. Young disciple ! Let this lesson be carved on thy heart, this lesson of constant, though it may be but gradual advance, an advance which can result only from minute and conscientious attention to what the world calls " little things." This alone can give you the beauty of a successful Christian life, and put you in the pathway

of future honors from the Hand of him who hath said "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." If your upward march has not been as rapid as you had hoped; if you have not progressed in the divine life as you intended and desired, be not disheartened, but rather, now, *Loose thyself* from every entanglement, and, *Press On!* Press on!! Press on!!! This is godlike!! The ladder which you have begun to climb is a tall one; it has many rounds; and as tall ladders are liable to fall, it becomes a necessity that you have a solid base upon which to rest it, and, a strong brace against which to lean it.

As you can not place a one-hundred-foot ladder against a fifty-foot wall and climb to its top in safety, no more can you safely ascend this spiritual ladder except as its top disappears beyond the clouds and leans against God's Throne, then, but not till then, may you upward move in safety, round by round, gradually! surely! joyously! triumphantly.

We have not wings, we can not soar,
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more
The cloudy summits of our time.

Such, are the beautiful words of "Longfellow" concerning advance in the present life, and such must be your thought concerning the present-divine-life, and the life-that-is-to-be. O! what marvelous possibilities are before every recreated, spirit-born, God-inspired being, who is walking with Christ in white, unsullied robes. The world! The world is under the foot of such a man, under the foot of Him, over whose heart sin has no power. Yes! to such an one an already conquered world is ready to submit. Aim high! Never rest satisfied with less than the likeness of Christ, for this should be the great object of every Christian life, even as it is the drift of revelation, the design of Apostolic preaching, yes, the great, central idea of Christianity. Says Bishop Peck, "The vast scheme of suffering, teaching, labor and agency has all been produced and is carried on solely to deliver man from his sins and ultimately perfect every Christian character; this produced the pastorate in all its forms, and this only caused God to give to the church "some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and some teachers for the perfect-

ing of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of faith, in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

God! His word! The Spirit! and our own inspired aspirations make the ascent a glorious possibility, even up to the arch-key of Christian character. Dear reader, you have not yet reached this radiant point where all the graces of God converge into a *blaze of glory*, but you have started out on the only royal road ever shown to man, by which that point may be attained.

He, whose beginning is at Calvary, may “go on from strength to strength,” changing from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord” and this the beginner will do, so long as he continues to walk in “the path of the just that *shineth more and more unto the perfect day!*” O! what heights are within range of possibility! Paul caught a glimpse of these future possibilities in the young Ephesian lives, and, throwing himself upon his knees he prayed, that,

“God would grant unto them the riches of his glory, that they might be strengthened with might by his spirit,” and thus equipped “might apprehend with all saints, the breadth, length, depth, and height, and know the love of Christ,” and finally “be filled with all the *fullness of God*.” How much we *have* in the divine life! how much more have we been able to *ask for* and *think of*, and yet, wonderful as it may seem, “He is able to do *exceedingly, abundantly, above all that we can ask or think*.”

No wonder that the “chief of the apostles” cried out with ecstatic joy “Unto Him be glory in the church throughout all generations forever and ever.

As you look up from the valley of repentance, and contemplate beginning the ascent to the holy city, *how far away it it appears to the highest heights!* Can it be that I shall ever attain to such glorious heights as I see beyond me? The mere thought of attempting to reach and touch those distant, out-hanging stars of divine grace almost wearies one until he remembers that *there is one way* of reaching those sublime, moral altitudes, and that is, by walk-

ing hand-in-hand with him who ascends “far above all principalities and powers ! and seats himself at the right hand of the throne of God.”

This ascent can not be accomplished in a moment, an hour, a day, a month, or a year ; for

Heaven is not reached by a single bound ;

But we build the ladder by which we rise,

And we mount to its summit round by round,

From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies.

O ! there is *comfort for the convert* in this fact, that while the summit of a Christian life is very high, and very far away, yet the ascent is possible, for, its gradual slope is ever upward, and Godward, with all the magnetic graces and glories of Heaven to draw the soul up and along. Vast seems the space, and great the difference between the coal sut of the chimney and the pure watered diamond which flashes in brilliancy from the bosom of the millionaire, but vast as seems the difference between them experts tell us they are one and the same thing, the diamond being but a vastly improved condition of coal sut ! Sut ! *clay ! porcelain ! sapphire ! opal ! diamond ! ! these are the ascending steps.* It is a long

way from the dust to the diamond, but by the proper process it becomes a possibility in nature's realm for the lower to reach the brilliancy and worth of the higher. Who shall deny to the immortal soul, the same possibilities, accorded to inanimate objects lying at our feet, when retouched and re-inspired with the spirit of the Holy God. O ! Convert ! be encouraged in your noble beginning and reach up after "the likeness of Christ," for, though far away there in the sunshine are your highest aspirations, and though you can not reach them as yet, still, you can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead, and, if even for the present you should be unsuccessful in scaling the boldest heights, or, securing the fullest realization of your heaven-born desires, yet, may you drink in consolation from the fact that you have grown in spiritual stature in your very effort to reach the higher mounts of God.

We may say of the spiritual world what another has said of the natural :

All things will yield to industry and time;
None cease to rise, but those who cease to climb.

Aim high, and your high aims will bring to you adornments, intellectual and spiritual, which gold is too poor to purchase, and gems that will shine with ever-increasing brilliancy in thy coronet when the sun shall cease to give his light.

“Beloved! *now* are we the *sons of God*, and it doth not yet appear what we *shall be*, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be *like him*, for we shall see him as he is.” With such a promise, and such a prospect, who would not struggle On, and Up, stopping never, and saying ever, “I shall be satisfied (only) when I awake in thy likeness.”

FORSAKE NOT THE LAW OF THY MOTHER, FOR
IT SHALL BE AN ORNAMENT OF GRACE UNTO THY
HEAD AND CHAINS OF GOLD ABOUT THY NECK.

Prov., i:8-9

“ALL THAT I AM OR EVER EXPECT TO BE I
OWE TO MY MOTHER.”

Abraham Lincoln.

MOTHER'S TEAR-STAINED LETTER.

I was rummaging through the attic. 'Twas not long ago,
And there were piled a myriad things, some black, some white as
snow.

Some were beautiful crimson, a few were touched with gray,
But colors did not hold my heart. 'Twas a serious tho'tful day.

For I'd been thinking, thinking! for me 'twas strange, indeed,
So seriously to contemplate the living and the dead,
Yet some way, thought revolving, reminded of the past
And made me think of the future, and what might be at last.

Again and again I pondered this question, O! how deep!
Till all uncalled the tears would start, I could not help but weep.
My heart was almost bursting, for thoughts came up of yore
When I bid farewell to mother and kissed her at the door.

The words that then she uttered were carved upon my heart,
And ever and anon for years, the tears, unasked, would start;
'Twas this sentence fell from mother's lips, "Your refuge, dear,
is God.

Remember this, when years have flown, and I am 'neath the sod."

For years I had been thoughtless, but could not be to-day;
I thought of my Christian mother, who in distant graveyard lay.
I recalled how she had kissed me and commended me above,
Then quickly came her farewell words, "God is your refuge,
love."

Thus I rummaged thro' the attic. 'Mong the many things found there,

Some were torn, and broken some, a few were rich and rare;
But among that pile of rubbish, which long untouched had lain,
Was a treasure found, a letter signed, with my sainted mother's name.

I read it o'er and o'er that day, in the attic all alone,
Till every line cut deep my heart and led me to the throne.
I wept, I knelt, I prayed sincere that my refuge God would be,
And lightning's flash came ne'er so quick, as his blessing came to me.

"Twas her old and tear-stained letter! I knew my mother's hand.
Through it I saw her face, her life, so pure, sublime, so grand!
Then I sang, " God is my refuge; my mother's God, my own!"
O! my heart was " strangely warmed " that day in the attic all alone.

O! that precious tear-stained letter, to me its worth's untold.
There is naught on earth could purchase it, not pearls, nor mines of gold;
For it brought anew the message from my mother 'neath the sod,
And alone I there accepted my true refuge, *Mother's God*.

PRAYER-MOMENTS SPENT WITH GOD ARE
PEARLS STRUNG FOR ETERNITY.

“GOLDEN VIALS FULL OF ODOURS, WHICH
ARE THE PRAYERS OF SAINTS.”

Rev., v: 8.

PRAYER.

James the inspired says, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Who can correctly and fully define "Much" as found in this sentence? How high does it ascend? How deep does it sink? How far does it reach? Can any one tell? No! For there is no rule of measurement! No standard of weights! No set of testing scales by which the rich fullness of this word, in this connection can be decided. However, some little idea of its magnitude may be gathered by carefully studying the ever wonderful prayer-results of other days.

Behold, the land of Israel! it is one unbroken scene of drouth, dearth, and desolation. King Ahab's meadows are burned to a crisp. His royal gardens have withered under the scorching suns and rainless skies for three and a half years. No rain-fall has moistened the earth during all that

time, and, the cattle of the royal stalls, and, the herds of the kingly fields are dying on a thousand hill-sides, and as the weary, worried, wicked King seeks relief for the famishing flocks, lo ! Elijah, the man of God, unexpectedly appears. Carmel's height is reached; the battle of the gods takes place; Elijah's prayer ascends and pierces the rain-filled clouds and unlocks the long-sealed heavens. "Behold, there is a sound of an abundance of rain," for the plea of the Tishbite has been offered and the promise of God fulfilled.

Again ! Hezekiah receives a letter from the leader of the Sennacharibian host, and in it is pictured the former victories of this great foe, and most insolently does the letter close by derisively asking "Where is the King of Hamath ? And the King of Arphad ? And the King of the city of Sepharvaim ? Hena and Ivah ? All these have I destroyed ! How then shalt thou be delivered ? Hezekiah knew the city was entirely surrounded by an almost innumerable host, and was aware that if the letters were read to the people, it would strike

terror to every heart, for, they well knew, all the former conquests of this, their cruelly-wicked foe. How then could the king or his people expect to escape! Is there a possibility? Yes, for lo! Hezekiah, the praying-king, kneels at the altar of the Lord's house and prays, not long, nor loud, but sincerely, and thus by prayer, without sword, arrow, or glittering arms, turns the tide of battle against the taunting foe!

His petition has reached the heart of God, and, in response to that prayer, "the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the Assyrian camp, a hundred and fourscore and five thousand." And the sunlight of the succeeding morn fell upon as many corpses scattered o'er the plain! Most beautifully has "Lord Byron" woven into poetic stanza this heaven-sent-angel-slaughter-scene in the following lines:

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold,
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Gallilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath flown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed,
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved and forever grew still.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride,
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

The widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temples of Baal,
And the might of the gentile unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

The prayers of the righteous! what wonders they have accomplished! By prayer, the sun-shade on the Dial-plate of Ahaz turns backward ten degrees! By prayer, three hundred war-chariots, and a thousand thousand armed Ethiopians flee from before pious and prayerful King Asa! The Moon over Ajalon's valley, and the Sun over Gideon's height, halt in their circling march as the plea of Joshua ascends! Yes! prayer brings heaven-kindled fires dripping

from the firmament to burn the bullock, altar, and trenched-up waters of Mount Carmel. Evil-spirited sons were healed; Devil-vexed daughters were cured, Demon-possessed men were released; and Pentecostal-fires burned brilliantly after the ten-day-prayer-service in the upper room! and as then, so :

Nations, now, in a day are born
By the prayers of faith at the altar's horn.

Truly, the fervent effectual prayer is the pulsation of a great and pious soul, for, *he prays best, who lives best, and prays most frequently!* To become proficient and efficient in prayer, it is necessary that we follow the steps in this particular line which others have pursued to make themselves adepts in their line. In the life of every successful specialist four things may be noticed, sincerity, ambition, frequency and love.

It was thus with Sir Isaac Newton who, from the falling apple, caught the idea of a great central, yet invisible force, which, when he had once firmly seized, never long allowed it to leave his mind, and gave himself no rest until he had searched out the laws by

which the planets are guided through the skies. This he accomplished by spending long nights in a lofty tower, gazing continually at the heavenly bodies, and, with telescopic aid, going up among the stars, and tracking them in their orbits. For years he seemed to have forgotten the terrestrial in his keen desire to comprehend the celestial. Indeed, the greater part of his life was spent among the upper-world-glories, millions and millions of miles away.

Persistent, patient, and pure, was Michael Angelo, the great Florentine sculptor, who was by far the ablest of his age, and who never dropped his chisel, till the cold marble was cut away and revealed in all its beauty the slumbering angel hidden there. Unceasingly, and untiringly he wrought in his work, for he was a man ever aiming at the highest ideal, and would never be satisfied till he had reached the perfection of his art.

So prayer, more than science and art ever can, may become so absorbingly delightful and real that we shall rise above ordinary wandering thoughts,

travel in spirit above the upper-worlds, and unconsciously grow eloquent while we speak "face to face with God."

"Men ought always pray, and not faint," were the advisory words of Jesus, and no sooner does the sentence fall from his lips than he, himself, retires to a lonely mountain-side or summit, where "He continued all night in prayer to God;" or, as in another instance, in order that he might be fully equipped and thoroughly armed for on-coming struggles "He rises a great while before day" to plead for needed assistance.

The law of His soul was the very opposite of nature's law, for the gravitating of His heart-thoughts was ever upward, and His very being reached up after God as naturally as the trellised vinelet struggles upward for the kisses of the sun. His life was one incessant prayer! Galilee and the grave of Lazarus heard the prayers of thanksgiving! Jerusalem heard the prayer for strength to glorify his father; the upper-room echoed with his voice as he prayed for the disciples and all future converts;

the garden caught the thrice-repeated appeal for submission, and even on the cross there sprang to His lips the prayer of forgiveness for the murderers at his feet. Yes! and though eighteen centuries have rolled into the past since then, yet, grave and garden; Galilee and upper-room; calvary and cross; all! all!! send back the echo of His offered prayers. By address and action; by parable and proverb; by precept and example; he crowds the conviction upon us that *prayer is life's great necessity*. He stands out alone as the peerless pattern of persistent prayer by first consecrating the prayer-closet and the bended knee and by his own constant and uniform prayer-habits teaches men how to turn the desert into an altar of devotion and convert the crowded city into a religious retreat.

In its influence and effects on the world such a prayer-life is as delightsome and refreshing as are the deep snow-wreaths and shady-clefts seen on the higher mountain of Britain, in the heat of a summer day. O! Convert, as did thy master, so do thou weave into thy life, thread by thread, and, link by

link, a golden chain of humble prayers and heaven-thoughts, for without prayer there can be no genuine Christian experience, and *the degrees of your experience will strikingly correspond with the depth and heartiness of your prayer-life.* The lark goes up singing, and the song grows in intensity, sweetness and melody, in proportion as it ascends towards the heavens, but, if the wing-motion cease, the song stops; the melody dies; and the songster settles straightway to the earth again. So, prayer is the wing-movement of the soul, it bears one heavenward! but if prayer cease, thy song is ended, joy is gone, and the down-drawing forces of sin will magnetize, grip, and drag back to the earth and its evils again, the soul, which had been attracted by the upper and heavenly forces. Prayer is the language of discovered want. It is the ascending voice of distress calling in a mightier one to aid in time of urgency and peril. Pray for yourself; pray for others; pray for all men; and in your petitions think of prayer, not as an overcoming of God's reluctance to grant your desires, but think of it, as it is in fact, your

weak faith at last comprehending and firmly grasping the willingness and power of God.

If at any time, there seems a hesitancy to respond, on the part of God, keep in mind that it is only a *seeming* hesitancy not a *real* unwillingness.

There was no reluctance with God when Jacob wrestled “till the break of day!” when Elijah prayed seven times ere the Carmel-shower came! nor when the plea of the Syro-Phoenician mother was temporarily delayed. No! It was to teach them, and the world through them, the possibilities of persistent prayer.

Augustine most beautifully says, “When God sometimes seems to give tardily, he does not deny his gifts, but commends them, for things long desired are more sweet when obtained, and by their temporary denial, faith; patience; and humility; are all called into exercise, for, by this means only, can it be shown, who will pray always and not faint.

If God temporarily keeps locked the door of his treasure-house it is only that we may the more appreciate the treasures when given to us, and how-

ever long the delay may seem to us the answer will come, for, the true suppliant is sure to triumph in the end, and carry away rejoicing the boon which he desired and which God was only waiting for the arrival of the proper moment to bestow. O! that all might know the power of persistent and incessant prayer and receive answers even as did the Syro-Phoenician mother in behalf of her child, or, as the supplicating neighbor insisting that his friend shall rise and give him as many loaves as he needs for the sustenance of the mid-night and unexpected traveler, or, as the troubrous widow prevailing with the unjust, self-confident and atheistic judge.

These, and many more, scriptural incidents, force upon us the conviction, that, prayer is an almost unlimited-power when properly and persistently applied.

Secular, as well as religious records of the past, are ablaze with the triumphs secured by the men of prayer. Here, we can give but a single instance from mediæval history. Gustavus Adolphus the courageous and beloved "snow-king of Sweden" was the

trusted leader of his own armies, and with them swept on in one unbroken channel of success. Enemies were overwhelmed ; cities were taken ; and nations were conquered ; indeed, wherever his sword flashed in the sunlight victory seemed a certainty. With him it was one unbroken track of triumph even up to the hour when, "Wallenstien" faced him with forces full of intrigue, and numerically much the superior of his own, and against which he made the historic "dash of death," which exposed him to a mortal wound, and from which he died breathing a "prayer of peace" for his family, and prosperity for his comrades. On the morning of that fatal Lutzen-Plain battle his whole army joined in the devotions of their king and commander, at the close of which devotions they broke forth singing in one loud paeon, Martin Luther's battle song "Eine feste burg est unser Gott." A German critic has said of Adolphus, "During his long career no low motive was ever revealed and no unworthy act ever sullied the brightness of his fame." Who of us will say, that, his unselfish devotion to his people, his bold-bravery in

times of peril, his unsullied brightness of character, his marvelous success, and his long, triumphant, and kingly career, was not due in large measure to his habits of devotion, his spirit of incessant prayer? As then, so now, *communion with God transforms the character*, polishes the countenance, and beautifies the entire man, physically, mentally and morally.

The veiled face of Moses flamed with a heavenly brightness after his forty-day communion with God, on the law-Mount of Sinai. The countenance, thought and life of Saul were suddenly, marvelously, and beautifully changed, when there fell in floods upon him, the shadow of the master which was “a light brighter than noonday-sun,” and ever after Jesus acknowledged him, giving as a final-and-convincing-proof of his discipleship and sincerity, “Behold! he prayeth.” And of Jesus Himself it is written, “He went up into the mountain to pray, and as he was praying the fashion of his countenance was altered and even his raiment became white and dazzling” and so beautiful and desirable was that prayer-hour on the mountain-top, that three voices blended as one in saying, “It is good for us to be here.”

A prayer life is a satisfactory and successful life, but *a prayerless life is full of defeat and sorrow.* Ten thousand duties may be successfully performed if each is preceded by faithful prayer, but one single duty unattended by soul breathings, which are the language of discovered want, would only result in failure.

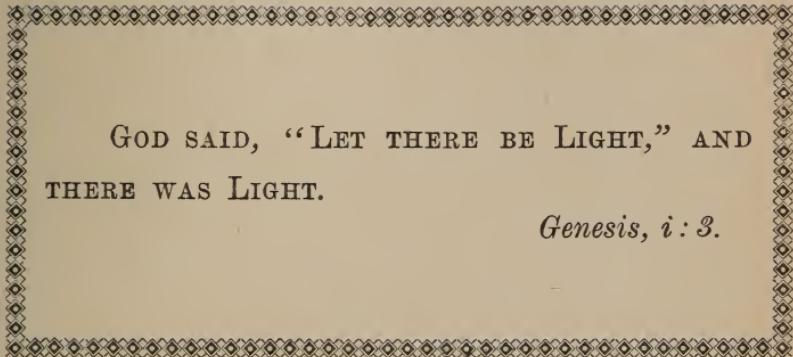
O! Young convert, let prayer precede each day's service, in the store; on the farm; in the home; on the train; in the shop; on the sea; in the school-room; or in the forest; everywhere and every day look up to the directing eye, the guarding-hand, the protecting-power of the loving, all-wise and Omnipotent One.

Said King David of Israel, "Morning, noon and night, will I pray unto Thee, O! God," and this daily-thrice-repeated-prayer-custom of the royal psalmist, if carried on in the lives of every recent convert, would be an up-building element, the like of which, there has not yet been sufficient.

Said Abraham Lincoln, "I have been driven many times to my knees, by the overwhelming conviction, that I had nowhere else to go."

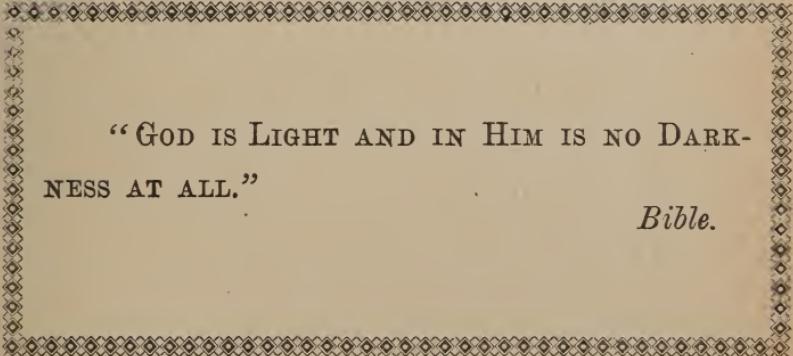
Said Bishop Heber when dying, "All is loss now, save the hours I have spent with, and for, God." O! May the above threefold-testimony of King, President and Bishop, help every young Christian to know the power and beauty of a prayerful-life, and may the reader conclude this prayer-chapter, as did the writer, by lifting the thought heavenward and saying:

O! thou! by whom we came to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
Thyself the path of prayer hath trod;
Lord! teach us how to pray.



GOD SAID, "LET THERE BE LIGHT," AND
THERE WAS LIGHT.

Genesis, i:3.



"GOD IS LIGHT AND IN HIM IS NO DARK-
NESS AT ALL."

Bible.

GOD IS LIGHT

Let there be light!

'Twas God's command!
To earth and sea and sky and land
And more than myriad flashing beams
O'er all earth's chaos swiftly streams.

Let there be light!

'Twas heard again!
And o'er the hearts and minds of men
Light flashed and blazed as brightest day
And God disclosed, to men, his way.

Let there be light!

Man's soul's aflame!
Accepts, adores that wondrous name
Which floods the universe with light,
Yes; gives the soul new day, for night.

Let there be light!

May nations sing!
Light to mankind, we gladly bring
Till as an over-whelming flood
A world is bathed in Jesus' blood.

Let there be light!

So shall it be!
Till world on worlds our Saviour see
And 'round God's—glory—circled throne
The true light, gathered nations, own.

Let there be light!

No sooner said!
Than light shall stream o'er all the dead
Then, they in Christ, who sleep, shall rise
And live in light above the skies.

A GOOD RULE OF LIFE.

John, ii:5.

“ WHATSOEVER HE SAITH UNTO YOU, DO IT!”

Bible.

“ WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING.”

JESUS.

WORKERS WITH GOD.

Apostolic declaration ! Inspired truth ! Ennobling thought ! creatures of earth priveleged and prevailed upon to join hand and heart with the God of Heaven, and thus united, redeem a world. Oh ! what exalted communion and co-labor is this ! If he chose, God could have sent angel-messengers flaming with light and truth, absorbed in their contact with God and seraphic-spirits, to have wrapped every new-born babe in garments of light, guard it in its growing years, and all through its life breathed into its ears truths divine. Or, if he chose so to do, he could have compelled each soul to make quick and complete surrender, and thus have brought all into subjection, but, no, he chose rather, by the love-power to win a single soul to the cause of right, and by that one, another, and by that still another, until the world should be garnered for God by these Christ-like mortals, blessed, and helped, and hurried on, by a deep and burning love for the Saviour.

In the realms of grace as in all of nature, man and God are seen as co-workers. In nature's fields, man plows, plants, and harrows, then, God sends the energizing forces to crowd up through soil; sand; and rock; the life of the seed planted, which seed developing and multiplying as it rises teaches us by every inch of growth that as a result of co-work, divine and human it can furnish and return a hundredfold to a needy and expectant world.

Again, man prepares his orchard soil, carefully places the rootlets of the tree, then leaves them to God, for man can do no more, his part is complete, and Now, God through nature, sends vitality to every twig, branch, and bough, soon the buds appear, these burst into blossoms, which fill the air with their fragrance for awhile, then drop off and down, to give place to fruit, abundant, lovely, large and luscious.

Co-work in nature's realm has reached a result! for tree, bud, blossom, fragrance and fruit, all is nature's gift from the hand of God, when tilled and tended by the hand of man! O! ye who are young

“workers together with God” begin now to work in spiritual fields, there expecting as large a return as in nature-fields. Let your part be performed then:

A mightier hand more skilled than thine
Will hang the clusters on the vine
And make the fields with harvest shine.
Man can but work, God can create,
But they who work, and watch, and wait
Have their reward, tho’ it seemeth late.

In his well arranged labor system, God *will not* work *without* man, and *man* in his frailty and self-helplessness *can not* work without God. Man may furnish some labor, but, God only, can furnish material and forces, and so beautifully arranged are nature’s plans that without the latter, the former would be useless.

Man of necessity is dependent upon God! God, voluntarily, is dependent upon man! Thus God has linked these agencies and by them seeks to save a world, seeks earnestly to save all, yet as earnestly seeks to save one as if he were all.

Wonder of wonders! that in this world-redeeming work, man is a partaker and co-laborer with God!

God-Man, here is the hope of ultimate and universal success. Man working persistently, and yet, waiting patiently; working as though God did nothing, yet, trustingly and confidently waiting as though he did everything. It is with this thought uppermost in mind that Paul declares "I can do all things" but immediately modifies his statement, so full of confidence, by adding "through Christ who strengtheneth me," for well did he know that a greater than he had said "Without me ye can do nothing." Not only Paul, but, indeed all the men and women of the past who have left the imprint of their lives upon the world's memory, have been those who considered their own weakness, and God's strength; their own littleness and God's greatness, as they asked "Who is sufficient for these things" and quickly answered their own question by saying "Our sufficiency is of God." Martin Luther, who braved the anathemas of the Roman pontiff, and would have gone to the convened council of the enemy "though every tile on the very house-tops in the highway were a Devil, "never ascended the pulpit stairs to preach the word,

and do the work of God, without trembling lips, and heart, and knees. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, great, grand, and godly man, was often heard to say “A mote in the sun-beam is little, but in the presence of God I am infinitely less.”

Great men were they! Yet great as they were they would attempt no task single-handed.

They ever sought a double force, to labor successfully in their double-work, of establishing truth and refuting errors, of building up the true, and, tearing down the false.

With implicit confidence in the strength of God, and believing that, his presence, as in the life of Moses would be ever with them, they moved on as flaming swords of truth crying:

My spirit yearns to bring
Thy lost ones back—. Yearns with desires intense
And struggles hard to wring the bolts apart
And pluck thy captives thence.

Paul may plant, an Apollos water, but God must give the increase, and this he will do, if our part is properly performed. To every trembling, honest heart, God reaches out an aiding hand, and

with a voice of tender sympathy says: "Fear not, I will help thee, I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand and thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small and shalt make the hills as chaff Yea, thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them, saith the Lord for I am with thee, yea, I, even I, will help thee."

Who would not grow strong under the inspiration of such a promise! It is not what talents or brilliant abilities men possess which turns the tide toward triumph, but, complete consecration and submission, which leads us to say as did Jonathan to his armour-bearer when they two alone were climbing up the sharp rocks of the Philistines' garrison:

"Come, let us go over against these Philistines, the Lord will work for us, for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few."

Going in such faith, no wonder the watchmen of Saul, looking out from the tower-top of Gibeah, said, in amazement, as he saw the enemy fall under the stroke of Jonathan's sword: "Behold, the

multitude melteth away"; for, as these two young men of faith advanced, the touch and terror of God fell upon the garrisoned group, and in wild alarm they fled, or fought, and fell down slain, for "the Lord saved Israel that day!!"

The record of the past is a long, loud voice, saying in unmistakable terms: "Know thou, that he hath set apart, him that is godly, for himself." David, with this truth as the basis of his strength, though only a ruddy-faced stripling of the sheep cote, may strike to earth's level a Goliath giant, who for forty days had been insolently offering a challenge to Israel's entire army. Behold! majesty blazes from the brow of the boy as he advances toward the mail-coated champion of the plains, and, with whirling sling, cries out: "Thou comest to me with sword, and spear, and shield; but, I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."

Moses! weak, fearful, and stammering-tongued, may yet lead out, with cornet, cymbal and song, six hundred thousand bondmen into the liberty-land of promise.

Weeping Jeremiah, saying “Ah ! Lord, I am but a child,” may yet hear heaven’s encouraging response : “ Say not ‘ I am a child,’ for I the Lord will make thee a defenced city—a brazen wall—against thine enemies.”

Gideon ! trembling at the wheat-rock and saying to the call of God : “ I am of the weakest tribe and of the poorest family,” may yet separate and send home cowardly thousands, and with his remaining three hundred immortals, rout Philistine hordes. History’s pages, secular and religious, are plainly marked with the finger-prints of God, and from them he who reads aright, may gather inspiration for the conflicts of coming years.

Paris, the French capital, had been turned into a gigantic fortress under Louis Phillippe and Napoleon III. Its walls were thirty-three feet high and twenty miles in length. Within this enclosure were two millions of people, attempting to withstand a long and terrific siege of the enemy ; but so long have they been shut up that starvation is about to sweep them all into the grave, their provision supply being

nearly exhausted. The outer channels of communication are guarded, the telegraph lines have been cut, and to all human appearances, they must perish *en masse* unless relief speedily comes. Will it come? Yes! the smallest and most timid, under direction of a greater than itself, is yet to deliver all. The great war minister of Napoleon secures to the neck of a little carrier dove a ribboned-quill on which is photographed many thousand words. Lo! it flies aloft, circling ever upward till out of danger's reach, then with surprising rapidity flies in straight lines to its destination, and delivers its message of relief. Paris was Saved! Saved! by a little dove, willingly working under the direction of a wiser than itself.

No Christian, however young, timid, or unqualified, can longer plead lack of ability, nor can any infirmity be offered as a reason for failure in the performance of duty, for Paul, heroic Paul, takes from us such a possibility by saying: "I glory in mine infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

In his unbounded confidence in God's omnipo-

tence, his very weakness became strength, his infirmities new sources of power! He did not shrink despairingly within the compass of his own poor abilities, but, in his heart of faith embraced his cause and went forth under the inspiring force of his call, to apprehend that for which he was apprehended. With one hand on the throne, let us with the other reach down and lift up a brother; the while breathing this sincere heart-prayer:

Lord ! Strengthen us that while we stand
Firm on the rock and strong in thee,
We may stretch out a helping hand
To wrestlers in the troubled sea.

Thus strengthened and God-attended, naught but victory can ever come. No power can long obstruct the onward march of these combined efforts of God and man.

Far easier would it be to tie the lightnings with a pack-thread! break the force of the whirlwind with the grip of your hand! shatter the mountains with a single stroke! still the sea by a single word! or by your command stop the cyclone in its mad march of death and desolation! As these can not be done,

no more can the combination of God and righteous men be permanently hindered in their ultimate and inevitable purpose or world conquest.

O ! Converts of Christian truth, such possibilities in the moral and spiritual world are loud calls for systematic and united work, united each to other and all to God! Onward then shall be the movement over a rebellious world, for, the result of cöwork, Divine-Human, must be a redeemed world in which shall be heard at no far distant day a song of victory far more significant than the shout of Achilles which rang out over the wind-swept plains of Ilium, more cheering than the harp and cymbal notes which fell from the fingers of Jewish maidens singing and leaping on Mediterranean shores as they saw Pharaoh's chariots and charioteers go tumbling into the sea !

It is coming ! It is coming ! the golden period when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea !" When no longer we shall need to say to our neighbor, "Know ye the Lord ?" for all shall know him, from the least

to the greatest. Yea, "Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ to the glory of God, the Father." Yea, more; when the universal shout shall ascend and lift the heavens in its upward sweep, proclaiming "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

Do you ask when this glad day shall be ushered in? Then, I answer, soon after the talents entrusted, whether one, two, or five, to the individual Christian shall have been utilized in spreading world-wide the spirit-touched truths of the Bible.

This is the design of Christianity. In every re-created soul it should be as the breath of God blowing across the continents, refreshing dying souls, giving new life to millions and changing the world's atmosphere in general.

From the heavens, comes to-day, the voice of Jesus, as impressively as it did to the divinely-arrested Saul on the Damascus Road "Rise, stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee, *for this purpose*, to make thee a minister and a witness both of those things which thou hast seen, and of

those things in which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto the living God, that, they too, may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me."

Look up! and mark the movements of the sun ; behold ! it thrusts out its light-beams or fingerlets of fire, and draws to itself every wandering or motionless fog-cloud. See ! It stoops to kiss the mists and air-damp of a Spring-morning, then lifting it, as if to its own bosom, cleanses, clears, beautifies, and sends it back to earth, a rain-blessing, without which heaven-lift, and sun-kiss, it would have spread only dampness, desolation, malaria, and death.

O ! Convert ! Full of the gospel thyself, thou canst go out with an over-running cup, whose over-flow shall fall on other thirsty souls, who, in turn, shall bless others with their recreated lives, and thus may you, working-with-God, originate rivers of blessing for all future years.

DO YOU WANT SUCCESS IN ANY LINE?
ASK YOURSELF IF YOU ARE WILLING TO PAY
THE PRICE OF SUCCESS!

NOTHING IN MAN IS GOOD OR GREAT ONLY
AS IT IS CONNECTED WITH GOD !

THE OLD MAN'S COUNSEL—"DON'T WAIT FOR LUCK."

On a sunny street corner in a small village town
Stood a raft of young men: boys, sitting down.
Some laughing, some joking, some wondering why
"Good luck, came so near them, yet, always passed by."

A sire of seventy, who had years of success;
Passing, heard the last words of the youthful address:
"I'll teach them a lesson, 't will help them," he said,
That it's 'pluck' and not 'luck' that will bring daily bread."

With a face all resplendant—heart blithe and gay,
He veered his intended course, went over their way,
And with smile of a Christain, hand-clasp of a friend,
He bid each his own life inspect, "consider its end."

Quoth the old man of years (full three score and ten)
"I'm right glad to see you, I am that, young men!
There's a future before you, all radiant with light,
If you serve God; and work hard; and keep to the right."

The aged-one passed on, but his counsel that day
In the hearts of those lads was forever to stay;
And do what they would, his advice to them stuck,
"Look upward; go forward, boys; don't wait for luck."

Oh! don't wait for luck to fall in your way,
If you do, my young man, you'll wait many a day!
Your teeth will all crumble—the snow on your locks—
Will tell you, at last, that you've "struck on the rocks."

No! don't wait for luck! get up like a man!
Uproll your coat-sleeves—do what you can;
Tip over the mossed-rocks—a treasure is there!
Awaiting the one who has no time to spare."

Luck comes to the one who goes in for the right;
In spite of Apollyon's legions of night,
To the willing—the active—not always most bright,
But to him who sincerely goes into the fight.

Luck! nonsense; there is but little of that;
Luck-trusters, fear pygmies, scare at a gnat,
They work not; nor think; nor labor alate;
Poor simples! for luck look, do nothing but wait.

Oh! youth of our country! Arouse ye, like men!
Find work! then at it—eight hours or ten—
Then you'll succeed! You're sure to have luck
That some wish for—but have not—they haven't the pluck.

There are many luck wishers standing idly around;
At their feet is a fortune—down deep in the ground—
But 'twill never be theirs—they haven't the pluck—
Nor the nerve, nor the manhood—"They're waiting for luck."

Oh! quick, break the snare, lest, thee it destroy!
You may yet rise to greatness, if you'll try it, my boy!
You will reach it alone, with Work, Goodness, and Pluck,
But you'll miss it, while standing round, "Waiting For
Luck!"

“THE WORKS OF GOD ARE CEASELESS, YET EVER SILENT! SO ALL THE MIGHTIER NATURE-FORCES: GRAVITATION; SUN-LIGHT; COLD; HEAT; ELECTRICITY; ARE EVERYWHERE FELT, BUT, NOWHERE HEARD! THEY, TOO, WORK IN SILENCE.”

AN INFLUENCE NOT ONLY LIVES FOREVER, BUT, KEEPS ON GROWING AS LONG AS IT LIVES.

SILENT FORCES.

The silent forces of the universe are many and most potent! The sun! that moulds the lily, paints the violet, and spreads the vari-hued tints upon the flowers of the earth; the Sun, that drives his golden chariot through the skies, and flings his beams far across the shoreless sea of stars and floating systems; the Sun that strips the snow-mantles from every mountain-top, pushes back the ice-bolts from every frozen stream, flings new life each spring-time over farm, field and forest, and melts all nature into beauty; the Sun, that has kissed the ocean for ages, and filled the rain-clouds with the dew from its lips, that has piled together enormous coal-fields in centuries past for use in years to come; the Sun, whose going forth is “from the end of the heavens, and his circuit unto the ends of it” going everywhere, and influencing everything, and from whose heat there is nothing hid, evidencing itself to be the most

powerful of all the natural forces *is, yet, always silent*, in its ceaseless and circling march.

Much as it has accomplished, long as it has labored, marvelous as are its forces, no human ear has ever caught the echo of its falling footstep! Silently, as the fabled-gods whose feet were shod with wool, it has moved in majestic tread, accomplishing, with its silent sunshine in one day, what a million men could not do in a lifetime. Silently it has touched, inspired, and kindled into a glow everything in all the ages gone, and in silence it will continue to revolve and radiate its beams of light and heat until the universal conflagration shall do away with sun, moon, and stars, yes, all the worlds of light.

In silence, too, comes the snow-fall, for, the heaviest snow-storm that ever locked the wheels of commerce, however thick it came, however high it piled, however dense it packed, was but the gathered force of frozen moisture, a collection of minute crystals, an aggregation of six-pointed snow-stars, falling one by one in silence, which with its silent but

irresistible grip-lock, bound the polar and temperate zones. Noislessly they came; trembling; flying; falling; till the earth was covered with a mantle of white, from which there went dripping invisible forces which made possible the future development of the sleeping forms beneath the winter's snow, so that at the first warm breath of springtime every root and bulb sent up its blade and flower even as by enchantment.

So, too, in *silence* is the labor of the frost! A great rock, upon which have fallen a hundred ponderous hammers without leaving a single dent or impression, is shattered, broken, and crumbled to dust, by that silent, yet seemingly semi-omnipotent frost-force which stealthily creeps into the narrowest crevice of that same dentless rock, and under the touch of a sunbeam, expands itself and seeks release, and splits the rock asunder.

Thus, again and again, is each piece broken until more than a myriad atoms lying all around, in splendid confusion, teach us that the *silent force* of a single frost-crystal, blended with the sunbeam's

kiss, can accomplish, what a hundred hammers can not. So too ! growing life in nature's fields, is an invisible, powerful, yet silent force. In its seasons, all nature grows, and grows continually. The tiny acorn becomes a mighty oak ! the little seed, a wide-branching shrub ! The tender sapling, a hardy tree ! a few kernels of corn multiply to millions ! and a handful of wheat fills the bushel ! In "March," winter's chill is still holding fast all nature, in "May," farm, field and forest, alike have robed themselves in their new-spring-garments, and the very leaves of the trees seem to clap their hands for joy. This wonderful, yet, silent energy thrills all nature with life, and forces new vitality into every root ; blade ; twig ; and leaf, yet, in all this marvelous and incessant transformation, not a sound has been heard, all has been performed in perfect silence !

Disease and death are the silent twin messengers of desolation ! Witness the passover night when the door of wrath swung open wide, and the avenging angel unsheathed and drew its flashing sword. Heaven and earth, alike, were hushed, and amid the

dread silence the stroke of judgment fell and in all Egypt "there was not a house where there was not one dead."

Rapid and ruinous as was the flight of the angel, no one of all the universe heard the tread of its footfalls, nor, even the rustle of its unfolding wings as it poised and plumed for its returning flight. In silence it came, in silence it went.

The terrific results of the London plague, and the serpentine silence with which this death-monster moved along its pathway, is thus graphically told in secular history.

"Noiselessly, the plague traveled over a third part of the whole earth, like the shadow of an eclipse, as if some dreadful thing had interposed between the sun and the world. At that epoch there was the silence of death, and all London was dumb as a church-yard. Its touch was a silent hand pointing to the grave. The very sight of the infected was deadly. Its symptoms came so silently, yet so sudden, that families seated in happiness at their meals saw the plague-spot begin to redden, and wildly scat-

tered themselves forever. Mothers, when they saw the sign of infection on the babes at their bosom, cast them from them and fled away. Some went into ships and anchored far out on the waters, thereby hoping to get beyond its reach, but the vial-emptying angel had a foot on the sea as well as on the land, and none could fly that it could not overtake. It was as if heaven had repented the making of mankind and was silently shoveling them all into the sepulcher. Justice was forgotten and her courts deserted. The grass grew in the market-places. The rooks and the ravens built their nests in the mute belfries. All commerce was in coffins and in shrouds. Horses perished of famine in their stalls while whinnying for their dead masters to come and feed them. Old friends, meeting on the highway only looked at one another, and passed on in silence. Little children wandered up and down the streets in amaze, or filled the corners as they fell in the weakness and silence of death! a silence unbroken for many a day! O! what powerful invisible, forces! yet all these snow! sun! frost! field-life! disease, and death, however

potent, are SILENT FORCES whose results are seen, but whose movements are all unheard. So too! there are mighty forces in the moral world, equally as active, powerful, and silent; one of which is, the silent influence of "PERSONAL CHARACTER."

Who can calculate its power, or by what means can we correctly measure it? Here is a force by which a child may set in motion machinery which, once started, a giant's hand can not stop! Character is a mighty force in the world. Character is the measure of a man's power and possibilities in the plans and works of God for the world. Froude, writing of the aroused and consecrated man of character who is fairly devoted to the right, says: "In such a condition a man becomes magnetic." Personal character! It is a silent "effluence which is continually radiating from every life, and most of all when one is the least conscious of it. Influence is immortal!! Once born it never dies!! Lessons learned from nature's wide domain are often rich, and sometimes linger long, though expressed in language of our own choosing. Such is the follow-

ing lesson learned while riding up "Chesapeake Bay" with moonlight splendour-robes wrapping it in folds of beauty:

'T was night on the Bay;

 All was splendor !

A myriad star-gems twinkled and flashed

Like laughing eyes of merry child.

 The night-queen shone

In her richest garb, and flung o'er

Chesapeake's waters,

 A mantle of light, which to us

Revealed nature's beauties, a thousand, before unseen.

The palatial steamer on which we rode and

Over whose gunwale we leaned and looked,

Ploughed in the deep waters a path; and left

Behind, a track of troubled sea,

A track, not wide at first, but wider, wider grew

As on, and on, the steamer moved, until ! at length,

So wide had grown ! in time so short !

 It either strand had touched !!

So ! thought I, it is with life's influence.

Passing across life's great sea,

 We touch ! and touching, leave our impress !

This track of influence, though narrow at first;

Ever widens as the years roll on ! Till

Far back in the centuries; so broad hath grown,

That, remotest time and space, are, in measure, molded by it, for
good or ill !!

O ! the silent force of a single soul !
When shall we learn the fullness of power wrapped up in thee ?
Thou ! silent spirit, called influence; whither goest thou ?
A response is heard, not aloud, saying:

“ Whither thou goest, I go !
As shadow follows substance,
So will I ever follow thee ! Save when
Thou diest, I die not !
I, thine influence, will live *on*, and *on*, and *ON*.
FOREVER ! ”

Dean Stanley, in a public address, said, concerning Arnold, of Rugby fame, his early and devoted teacher: “ The lapse of years has only served to deepen the conviction in my mind, that, no gift can be more valuable to the young than the inspiration of a great character, working on our own.”

Wrapped up in the character of the present are the characters of the future; for the myriad little words; ways; and deeds imbed themselves in every character now touched by them. As in the rain-drops are found the nucleus of the mighty ocean; as in the silently falling snow-flakes is hidden the vast avalanche; as in the little bud upon the vine is wrapped the air-filling perfume; so, in each life, however lowly or silent, are hidden forces, that must

eventually and inevitably effect to some degree all with whom they come in contact. How long we live! If not in our own life, then in the lives of others!

A young man away from home slept in the same room with another young man, a stranger. Before retiring for the night, he knelt down, *as was his custom and silently prayed!* His stranger room-mate had long resisted the Spirit's call, but, this nobly-brave example of the young stranger aroused him, and he soon after gave himself to Christ.

He never met that praying-youth again, but, in old age, after having preached the gospel with unusual power and success, he was heard to say "Nearly half a century has rolled away, and I have forgotten a multitude of events since then. But, that little room, that little couch, that silent-praying-stranger-youth, are still fresh in mind and can never be forgotten, even, amid the splendours of the glory-world." It was that simple act of common faithfulness, unostentatious, and silent, from which there went out an unconscious force, that, gave to

the church a minister of rare power and value, and to the world, a sympathetic Christian friend.

Followers of Jesus ! chisel deep in your minds this one fact, that, your individual life has a silent force which reaches out into the future, and, in a measure moulds and fashions the destinies of uncounted thousands. O ! ' Tis an arousing, soul-thrilling stanza, brilliant-with-truth which declares:

“We are living, we are dwelling”
In a grand and awful time,
In an age on ages telling,
“To be living is sublime.”

As the tuberose silently exudes its rich perfume ; as the stars let fall upon us their mantle of tenderness and quiet ; as the seasons change ; and, come and go, altering in their silent steady march, the face of the natural world ; so, a devotedly-pious-life, silently ; steadily ; inevitably ; changes the face of the moral world ! What “ Bryant ” in his “ Leggett Memorial ” says of his friend, is true of all men everywhere, so far as life’s influence is concerned :

“ The words of fire that from his pen
Were flung upon the printed page
Still move! Still shake! the hearts of men
Amid a cold and coward age.”

It is declared to be impossible “ to bind the sweet influences of the pleiades,” so, we affirm it is equally impossible to limit, arrest, or destroy, the silent-forces incessantly operating in, and radiating from the life of a Godly man, for :

Such life as his can ne’er be lost,
It blends with unborn blood,
And through the ceaseless flow of years
Moves with the mighty flood;
His life is our’s, he lives in us,
We feel the potent thrill,
And through the coming centuries
The world shall feel it still.

O ! Convert of Christ, remember the silent forces that incessantly and invisibly radiate from thy new life, and act henceforth as though the good of all the world hung upon your influence !

THE NIGHT IS DARK AND PAIN WEIGHS HEAVILY,
BUT GOD WILL HOLD HIS WORLD ABOVE
DESPAIR.

LOOK TO THE EAST !! WHERE UP THE LUCID SKY
THE MORNING CLIMBS !! THE DAY SHALL YET
BE FAIR !

“Celia Thaxter.”

“WHO IS THERE AMONG YOU THAT FEARETH
THE LORD, THAT WALKETH IN DARKNESS, AND
HATH NO LIGHT? LET HIM TRUST IN THE NAME
OF THE LORD, AND STAY UPON HIS GOD.”

Isa., 1:10.

DARKNESS DISPELLED BY DAWN-DIVINE.

How strange is life! 'Tis so; not seems!
'Tis full of castles, full of dreams,
That realized are never!
We crowd our thoughts with many a plan
Work hard for God; work long for man;
Yet disappointed ever!

We thought! and that not long ago,
That all seed sown would surely grow
Watered by God's own hand!
Why, then, this long, this sad delay,
This holding back, from day-to-day
The harvest from our land?

Oh! heart, you put me now to task,
For deeper question none can ask
Than you have asked of me!
What! Why is your life thus and so?
Why this change? That? I can not know;
God alone can see!

And see he does, the works of man,
He knows their every thought and plan,
Their every true endeavor!
And what you "ken" so darkly now,
To it, in years, you'll gladly bow;
Yea! doubt again you'll never!

Then trust him, heart! hath he not said
"Sure is thy water, Sure thy bread,
The harvest shall not fail!"
Ah! in due season, God's good time,
There'll be a reaping! grand! sublime!

That you will gladly hail!
That reaping time will be for you,
A gathering of the small, the few,
That you had thought were lost!
Thy God knew better; that, by thee, sown;
By him, was garnered near the throne,
He counted all the cost!

“I LONG TO HAND A FULL CUP OF HAPPINESS TO EVERY HUMAN BEING.”

O ! TO BRING SOME DROPS OF JOY TO HEARTS
ALL CRUSHED WITH GRIEF.

JOY BRINGERS.

Light ! Sunshine ! Gladness ! Joy ! What a quartette of rich and ringing words are these ! Oh ! glorious thought, that as Christians we may possess these in fact, and in all their fullness. Do you ask how ? Then I answer in Bible-language, *by walking with God* ; “in whose presence there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures forever more.” This is the only way in which true joy, desirable, and permanent, can be secured. There is but one avenue to Joy-land, and that is purity of purpose ; holiness of heart ; and a certain degree of God-likeness in character. This statement is confirmed by an investigation of experience, in by-gone ages, and, among former peoples. Revelation, too, upholds this declaration, in all its myriad-numbered, and brilliant-hued sentences, which, like hand-guides, point to the paths, which leads to peace, joy, and gladness. Listen ! as it says ; “Let the righteous be glad ! Let the *heart*,

of them that seek the Lord rejoice! Let all such, exceedingly rejoice, before the Lord!" Says David: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God, for, He hath clothed me with the garments of his salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of His righteousness." It is only the righteous soul, seeking in sincerity the way of truth, that has joy unalloyed, unmixed, and unattended with future grief.

The moral condition of the soul determines the quality and quantity of life's joys. Here is the much, desired and long-sought fount of real happiness—and he only is brave enough to stoop and drink of its crystal flow, whose heart is right with God. Gold, position, or the shallow-ceremonies of the worldling, can not buy, bribe or barter for it! It is that which comes, and comes to stay, in every truly consecrated soul. To such a soul, and to such only, is the privilege given to "*rejoice, REJOICE ALWAYS, and REJOICE FOREVERMORE.*"

Real heaven-born gladness is not the result of temporal prosperity, nor, does it depend upon

external sources for its continuance. *It is the out-flow of inner blessings, rather than the inflow of outer blessings.* Though every external comfort be swept away, still, may the true man-of-God say, in the language of the prophet Habakkak, “Although, the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall, yet, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.” Doubtless, there are many, who by careless word, thought, or deed, stand in their own sunshine, and though they may be unconscious of it, dim, too, the glory-light that, otherwise, would mantle-with-splendor, the lives of men near them. Instead of a countenance blazing with the beauties of a devoted life, and flashing like the sun-king in his undimmed brightness, there is seen, alas ! in too many, a defect ; a defilement ; a deformity ; which drives away the sun-light of the upper-world, and leaves only earth’s icicles piercing and chilling the unsanctified heart.

The design of God, in all ages, has been to have a joyous people, and to this purpose adequate provision has been made. Here are, "Wells of Salvation, from which water may be drawn with joy." Here too, are, "words spoken, that our joy might be full." Yea! more, God himself undertakes the task by declaring "I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Live! Look! listen! and in the hush of thy holiest meditations thou wilt hear God saying, "I have put my spirit upon thee, and, with this spirit thou mayest comfort all that mourn; give unto them beauty for ashes; the oil of joy for mourning; and the garment of praise, for the spirit of heaviness:" O! Convert of Christ, rise in the splendors of thy new-born life! ascend from height to height, from summit to summit, and drink thou from the down-flowing "rivers of God's pleasure," and as you drink, remember, a world of unquenched grief is at your side, pleading with out-streached hands for some little ray of sunshine, reflected, from the lives of you, who by faith, should dwell so near the throne of inaccessible light and glory.

There is a vast procession of weary human-beings, traveling around the earth in a vain search for joy, when the only perfect means of joy is just at their hands.

Hundreds, there are, who imagine that somewhere over the mountains or beyond the sea is the object of their quest, and thither they go, only to find that they have but gone in vain.

True abiding joy is secured, not so much from distant scenes, or the use of other means, as in the faithful, humble, cheerful use of the means we have, in the place we are.

To do the plain duty of the moment, quickly ; cheerfully ; this will materially aid in bringing the joy we so anxiously seek.

Perhaps, no greater mistake is made, and more frequently, than the one of expecting, at some other time, in some other place, or under some other circumstances than those by which we are now surrounded, the rich, deep, and full joy we so much desire.

How often we witness the experience-repetition

of the mistaken lad, who having heard that a four-leaf clover, always brought joy and good fortune, and, that, with one in his possession, he would be successful and perfectly happy; started out to find this all-desirable talisman.

He traveled over many countries; climbed many mountains; crossed continents and seas; but, alas, it was all in vain. Wearied at last with his life-long and luckless search, he returned, in disappointed old age, to his boyhood home, to die! when, as he came up the familiar path-way of his childhood home, lo! there, close beside the doorstep grew a four-leaf clover! then, he learned, but alas! too late, that he might have found at his very door, in life's start, what he found not in a life's travel and weary search.

Young Christian-disciple! seek your joys in God, and present surroundings, and, if faithful in the performance of known duty, however small it may appear, you will find them!

Be not selfish in your search for joy! for, a selfish soul can no more be happy than a rose could be beautiful without color or fragrant without perfume.

Paradoxical as it may seem, *to give is to get!* and the way to increase our own joy, is to share that we have with others! See! the flowers scatter their fragrance and yet are none the less sweet! the stars drop down upon us their mantles of brightness and yet are none the less brilliant! The birds fill the air with their song, yet, is their warbling none the less sweet, nor their trills less melodious! God gives to them as they give to others! and what is true of flowers, star, and bird of song, is true of joyous souls. “I cannot relish a happiness which no one shares in but myself,” so, said a certain noble emperor, and the very sentence glows with the grandeur of true greatness! Let Christian souls everywhere be not only *joy-getters*, but also *joy-bringers*. Let grace in their hearts be as ointment in their hands, the fragrance of which can not be concealed, but naturally scatters itself, and reaches all who are near. Give to others a portion of that “joy-unspeakable and full-of-glory” which God has given to you.

“Christ’s great design,” says Baxter, “was to save men from their sins,” but he delighted also to save

them from their sorrows. Everywhere and at all times, he sought to turn tears into smiles, and to make his presence so cheering and helpful that mourning hearts would rejoice at the echo of his foot-fall. Indeed, the climax of his splendid life is reached when it is written, "He went about doing good," for thus he ameliorated the temporal evils of humanity; sent rays of sunshine into comfortless homes; and spanned the horizon of every observer with the rainbow of joyful hope.

O ! to be like him a heavenly voice, bearing to the world the joy of God ; a voice ! which shall ever keep this joy ringing in the ears and the hearts of men, like the music of an everlasting chime, and this we may do if we keep our hearts and lives, full of cheerful, Christian song.

An Italian poet once asked "Haydn," the great Christian composer, how it happened that his church music was always of an animating, cheerful and even gay description. Haydn replied, "I can not make it otherwise ! I write according to the thoughts I feel; and when I think of God, my heart is so full of

joy, that notes dance and leap from my pen! I serve him with a cheerful spirit; I have a gladsome heart; and therefore, give to others a cheerful song." Joy would come to many a heart, now filled with grief, if the grief-stricken would seek to comfort others. Their very tears of sadness would be sparkling gems to make the joy-rays brighter, for, though we can not explain why, yet, it is a fact, that those hearts which have suffered the most sadness, bring the most joy to others. Perhaps, it is sympathy springing from a similarity of sorrows, or, possibly, God has designed that those hearts, which have less apparent joy for themselves, shall bear the more real joy to others. The crushing sorrows of some lives have been the means of breaking open fountains of joy for others, for it is with the heart, as with the geranium, always sweet, but seldom so fragrant as when bruised and crushed. Never was diviner music heard by mortal ears than when Seraphic Spirits sang over the Bethlehem hill-tops on that first Christmas night, "We bring you good tidings of great joy."

More cheering words were never uttered than

those which the angels then dropped into the ears of the affrighted shepherds, yet all this joy and good cheer were to come through the suffering of Him who is pathetically described as “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” O ! Yes ! it may be ; yes !

It is a truth beyond our ken,
Yet 'tis a truth which all may read;
It is with roses as with men,
The sweetest hearts are those that bleed.

John, the Revelator, says, “I looked, and, lo ! an angel, standing in the sun.” To see an angel is to behold beauty and splendour ! To see an angel standing in the sun, is to witness, beauty, and splendor, aflame: surely, from such a being in such a place fell many a brightening ray !

Converts ! Ye are not angels, nor, can ye stand in the sun, but ye are Christains, and ye may shine gloriously, for, “Your light is come and the glory of God is risen upon you,” and at your joyous-welcome, “Gentiles will come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” Oh ! That by strong lives, and sterling characters, ye may be heaven-lit souls bearing to the struggling millions

with whom you come in contact, in your upward march, the light-and-joy-rays of a better world! Let prayer and song be wrapped in the folds of a sun-light experience, then, will your cheerful words produce their image in the souls of men, and a beautiful image it will be.

Young converts! you have often been refreshed by the presence of cheerful christian persons, and why not you, like them, be always cheerful yourself and thus confer refreshing pleasure upon others. In order to do this, seize on the fragments of happiness that lie all about you. I say "fragments of happiness" for after all, happiness like gold, is oftener found in minute particles, than large and weighty nuggets.

If you would be happy, and, cause others so to be, you must "gather up the fragments!" Seconds, are but little dots-of-time, yet, combine a sufficient number of those small time-dots, and they make an hour; a day; a week; a month; a year! Yea! a whole life-time! The sources of happiness may be small, but, they are numerous, and it is yours to

draft these particles of sunshine into your life, and, thus gather a vast amount of joy for your own and other pathways.

Let us watch that no single ray of joy ever evade our grasp, then will hearts be helped in their struggle with the problem of life, and we shall not grieve for the golden-moments slipped away. It would, indeed, be a sad finality, to go to the grave, and feel at life's close, unconscious of ever having diminished one drop of human sorrow, or, made happier, a single one, of the world's-myriad-aching-hearts. Through grace there are souls which have the gift of finding joy everywhere and carrying it with them to scatter it wherever they go.

Joy gushes from under their fingers like jets of light!

Their very influence is an inevitable gladdening of the heart! They give light without meaning to shine, and, surely, such bright hearts have a great work to do for God. A young girl in a certain Western city, was one of the loveliest characters that ever bloomed on earth. She was everybody's friend,

and everybody's favorite. She moved among them like a flood of golden-light, scattering joy at every step, and radiating it with the utterance of every word. She was not what the world calls handsome, but, rather, she was of common appearance. Indeed, the lineaments of her face were such, that, had it not been for the inner-sunshine which flashed its light-beams, to lip, eye, face, and brow, and over all wreathed smiles of heavenly sweetness, she would have been called homely, but, that tender, never-forced, graceful, christian smile, won every heart, so that it was no uncommon thing to hear people say as they left her presence "What a beautiful girl Annella is," and, such she was in her brilliant character. Yea! doubly-brilliant because she lived in thought and purpose so near the gates of God, that light celestial fell upon her soul and reflected itself upon others.

The secret of her beautifully resplendant and cheerful disposition was this. She always wore about her neck, a little sacred locket which none but herself was ever allowed to open. None ever knew

what it contained until one day she was stricken down with a dangerous illness from which her physician declared she could never recover. When this news was borne to her she permitted her young Christian friend sitting beside her to open the locket, and there written with the beautiful pen-touch of "Annella" were the words, "*O ! to be like Christ, whom having not seen I love.*" That hidden away, but incessant prayer was the secret of her handsome, sun-like, majestic and cheerful Christian life.

By her incessant desire and purpose to be like Christ she had been changed into the glorious image of Him, who bore in His own spiritual being, joys enough to fill a world. Ye too, may receive the Christ-life into your hearts and, if not hindered by a wrong spirit, or unholy deed, will work its way out through the crust of your lives, and fall as song and sun on all around. We may not all be Heaven-inspired songsters to thrill vast audiences with melody's charm, but we may have heart-hid the "Joy of God" which is "unspeakable and full of glory," and thus *be a song; a poem; a light beam; a sun ray; to the*

world. Far better is this than all the accomplishments of art, music and melody, if these be unsanctified and consecrated, for, though from our lips there fall not a single note, rhyme or poetic gem, yet, we *may be* a song, a music of God's own making and this is an almost ideal state, for as one hath said:

'Tis better to have the poet's heart than brain;
Feeling; than song; but, better far than both
To BE a song—A music of God's making.

Go thou ! youthful follower of the Nazarene, and gather sunshine from the gates of God, then, let the beauteous rays of thy heaven-born life, break through the gathering gloom of others' pathways. Would you accomplish this? Then, you must ascend the spiritual mount of transfiguration and there abide till thy heart is "white as no fuller can white it," and, with this flood of purity, light; and joy; still bathing head; brow; hand; and heart; go down the mountain-side, and, divide thy fullness of joy, with a world all crushed in grief. The thornless rose blooms, and, scatters its aromatic gifts on the snow-clad and frozen summit of the Oriental Highlands,

so you Christian ! from thy high and heaven-kindled life filled with the perfume of purity may scatter sweetness and joy in this grief-shrouded world, and when the present universe recedes from your sight, a new world will break upon your vision, and, with heaven's gold; crown; harp; pearl; pilgrim; and throne rising in its splendid magnificence before you, you shall hear the throne occupant, Jesus ! the joy-giver, say "Well done, good, faithful servant, enter thou into the JOY OF THY LORD."

“HONOR THE LORD WITH THY SUBSTANCE
AND WITH THE FIRST-FRUIT OF ALL THINE IN-
CREASE, SO SHALL THY BARNS BE FILLED WITH
PLENTY, AND THY PRESSES SHALL BURST OUT
WITH NEW WINE.”

THEREFORE, AS YE ABOUND IN EVERYTHING,
IN FAITH, AND UTTERANCE, AND KNOWLEDGE,
AND IN ALL DILIGENCE, SEE THAT YE ABOUND IN
THIS GRACE ALSO.

II. Cor., viii:7.

OUR CHAPLAIN'S PLEA.

TO C. C. McCABE, D. D.

“A million for missions” too much ! did you say ?
It is only a farthing from the wealth of this day !
It is only a cup from our great sea of gold,
Yea! only a mite from our riches untold.

“A million for missions” too much, can you say !
When you think of the darkness 'mong those far away,
As you see the great need of those at your door
O ! Sure, you say, rather, “I'd wish to give more.”

The call is a great one, the need is as great,
The rough must be made smooth, the crooked made straight,
All high places lowered, and low places high,
So Christ in his triumph may descend from the sky.

What part of the million am I able to bear ?
How much of this burden am I willing to share ?
It may be but little, yet that shall be given,
Though unnoticed on earth, 'tis recorded in heaven.

“A million for missions” this plea shall not die
On the lips that first uttered it, born from on high,
We'll fling down our gold, our treasures we'll give,
Thus the world shall have light and nations shall live.

“A million for missions” Lord, speed thou the day
When rough rock and hillock are cleared from the way.
Then, with knowledge, as sea-waters, earth be o'er rolled,
And a world shall be glad with the Christ-story told.

“WHERESOEVER THIS GOSPEL SHALL BE
PREACHED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD, THIS
ALSO THAT SHE HATH DONE SHALL BE SPOKEN
OF FOR A MEMORIAL OF HER.”

Mark, xiv: 9.

“BE READY TO EVERY GOOD WORK.”

Titus, iii: 1.

WORLD WIDE MEMORIALS.

“The odor of the ointment filled all the house where they were sitting.” Such, is the striking and significant sentence concerning a single act of a once careless but now repentant and rejoicing soul. “All the house!” yes! the odor of that spikenard has touched house, heart, home, and life, and its fragrance shall yet extend wide as the world and far as the family of God. That simple, unostentatious act of a truly grateful heart, has been far more fragrant than would have been an ocean of the “Otter of roses,” one single drop of which is sufficient to sweeten leagues of space.

The fragrance of that act has increased in quality and quantity with the onflow of ages. It has overstepped all the limits of space! It has overrun all boundaries of time.

A single grain of musk, will fill a chapel with its delightful fragrance, so, that many persons may breathe its odors, yet, it loses not of weight, or value

a single iota, when tested, by the most delicate scales, ever designed or constructed.

This is marvelous, yet, it is even more marvelous, that, the perfume, which rose from the broken box, shattered at the feast of Bethany, centuries ago, has not only not lost in weight, or value, but, rather, has grown in sweetness, strength and quantity, till, touching the remotest corners of the earth, and, tendering the hearts of all mankind, there has been a literal fulfillment of the Master's prophetic words, "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there, shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

With the flight of years, unnumbered generations of rich, Simon-like pharisees, with little, narrow, selfish, and everwithering souls, have been born, buried, and forgotten, while this one fragrant act of the uninvited, but Christ-loving guest, lives to thrill, and inspire to large liberality, nations yet unborn. It was but a little act of grateful benevolence, and, of itself, must have been soon forgotten, but, for the commendatory words of Christ: "She hath done

what she could." These put a brilliancy upon that deed of love, sufficient to make it shine, forever, on the tablet of Eternity. As the perfume of the tuber-rose remains in your room long after the flower itself has been removed; or, as the evening chimes of sweet silver-toned bells linger long after they have ceased their ringing; or, as the tinted beams of the sinking sun-king fall on western hill-tops even after the sun itself has disappeared from sight, so, the beneficent acts of a liberal, god-like soul, linger; live; and lighten the world of men, long after the body has gone to rest, yea; saith the spirit, their works do follow them, and, though dead, they yet speak." Some, there are, who leave an imperishable name, founded on many imperishable acts of charity, the smallest of which "A cup of cold water" shall not be unrewarded in the coming of the Lord.

In all of English history, perhaps, no name is more familiar, than that of "Sir Phillip Sidney," a man, who was by all, conceded to be the gentlest, and most accomplished spirit of his times. His whole life was beautifully unselfish, and full of kind-

liness, and, even, the last act of that splendid soul has marked itself as sublime, and put upon the performer's name a fragrance so lasting that the world has ever since believed, his name was never born to die. Read of the dying man's deed. Here it is :

Lutzen, a beautiful little city, at the meeting point of Rivers Yssel and Berkel, in the Netherlands, was besieged. Sir Phillip was in the conflict and there received a mortal wound. He was being borne in loving arms off the field of battle when he looked up and said to his colleagues, "I am dying! carry me no further, comrades, but, hasten and procure me a cup of cold water with which I may quench this intolerable thirst, quick! comrades! I—will—soon—be—gone."

The water was hurriedly brought, and was being lifted to his lips, but, just then, he turned and saw a wounded soldier being carried by, who cast a longing look toward the cup. Sir Phillip kindly, but quickly, pushed back the water from his own lips saying, "Give it to my comrade, his necessity is greater than mine." In a few moments Sir Phillip

died, and, later was buried at "Arnheim," but the memory of that beautiful life, ending with a cup of cold water to a dying comrade, has never been buried, though three long centuries have passed away. O ! yes, men may be buried, but, *the loving deeds, of unselfish lives will live on, long as the unburied years of God.*

There is a double-series of circles in every one's life. One, is the circle of self, which narrows as it rises ; the other is the circle of charity, which widens as it ascends. The soul that moves only in the former circle, is to be pitied, for, consciously or unconsciously it is each hour growing more compressed, narrow, and little, as it thinks, only, and always, of self, and selfish interests.

The soul moving in the latter circle is to be admired and imitated for, it too, consciously or unconsciously, in its noble reach after God-likeness, and struggle to raise a needy world, rises in majesty upward, and ever-upward, rising, growing, expanding, yea, attaining the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and at last touching the throne.

Only such a soul can grasp the richness of the Master's words when he said "Give, and it shall be, given unto you, good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over shall men give into your heart." Yes ; Goldsmith was right when he said :

"Rich is he whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind."

Past experience force all men to know that the period of life which is most delightful and refreshing to memory is that in which we put aside selfish, interests and live to bless and benefit others. Surely, none of the present age desire to have said of them what a biographer says of the selfish Christina, the Swedish queen, "None loved her while she lived, nor regretted when she died, nor planted on her grave a single flower."

Such a comment at the "*coffin of a queen*" is a striking contrast to the comment of Christ on the odor-spreading act of the uninvited guest at the Pharisees' feast. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," such were the words of the Master, who, himself, is ever giving in rich abundance, and floods

the universe with a prodigality of gifts, which are, at once, needed; useful; and overspread with beauty.

A myriad gifts from God, in the world of nature, shine in undimmed splendors all about us.

Flowers are everywhere in abundance; from the banks of the Rhine, to the snow-line of the Alps. They bloom in obscure valleys and in the crannies of inaccessible rocks. Myriads of them are in out-of-the-way places, where no human being ever sees their beauty or smells their fragrance. Birds of splendid plumage dwell in trackless forests. There are cascades, in unvisited gorges, and gems in unfathomed seas. River and ocean, meadow and mountain, are full of beauty, and, the splendor of the heavens, who can describe or paint?

The sunlight! How it abounds. It is not eked out in particles just enough to illumine so many eyes and no more; it *pours* upon us; it *floods* us; it *deluges* the world; it flings its splendors across that boundless sea, where stars and systems float. Walk anywhere, and you tread on the wonderful! Look anywhere, and you see the sublime! Nature is no

miser, but, to the eye of this commerical and utilitarian age, she seems rather a waster, for there are myriads of flowers which perish unadmired. Only a little of all the bird-music is ever heard by mortal ears ; for the most part, the avalanche shoots unseen into the valley ; and, only a handful of the sun's boundless light is ever utilized. *The ocean is very deep, and the mountain is very high !* Nature abounds in liberal gifts and her great, abundant, and never-ceasing gifts to man, echo, continually in his ears, the words of the Master, “ *Freely ye have received, freely give.*”

The river flows down its channel, not in a narrow selfishness, but in a broad liberality, giving as it goes, alike to mill-race ; reservoir ; and fish-pond ; causing the grass to grow ; the flowers to bloom ; and trees to live and thrive on its verdure-covered banks. Indeed, everything with which it comes in contact is beautified, and benefited, cheered and gladdened. Nothing can touch its pure and sparkling bosom without being refreshed. In its waters birds dip their pinions ; fish leap in its trembling flashes of

sunshine ; cattle slake their thirst, or lash themselves with its cooling drops ; yea, too, with its crystal-flow, the exhausted fever-patient relieves his parched lips, and

Thus it flows, forever flows,
Giving always as it goes.

God, in his final and sublimest work of man-creation, has taught us by our very heart-throbbings that the continuance of life, yes, the very growth of the heart and the body, which is the heart's casket, depends upon the double-acting valves of the heart, that wonderful reservoir of vitality. The outflow past the "tricuspid valves" is as necessary as the inflow of liquid life past the "mitral valves." *To get and get and never give is contrary to all nature.* See ! The orchards ; they force their leaves, crowd their blossoms, fling out and scatter their fragrance, yet they have left an abundant harvest of luscious, wholesome fruit. The geranium ; lilac ; and rose, toss around us their sweet-scented aromas ! The gardens, fields and woods scatter their odors everywhere, and all nature gives out a fragrance which rises as a

sweet-smelling sacrifice, ever ascending, till it reaches the throne and touches the breath of God.

SHALL MAN DO LESS THAN BIRDS, BROOK,
FIELD, AND FOREST !

An Eastern allegory runs thus: A merchant going abroad for a time gave respectively to two of his friends, two sacks of wheat, each, to take care of till he should return.

After years had passed, the merchant returned, and immediately applied to each of his friends for the wheat he had left in their care. The first led him aside to his storehouse and granary, and there showed him the sacks of wheat. Yes! they were there, but they were mildewed and worthless! The merchant friend said, "I give you all I left with you and what you have gained from them shall be yours also." The second friend when asked by the merchant for that left in his care, led him out into a broad, beautiful and open plain, and there pointed out to him field after field of waving golden grain,

the product of the two sacks left those years in his care.

Said the merchant to his active friend, "You have been a faithful friend. I give you all I left with you, and what you have gained from them shall be yours also."

All this is but a fulfillment of the scripture, "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; but he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." O ! that we may learn, that

"The heart grows rich in *giving*,"
All its wealth is living grain :
Seeds, which mildew in the garner;
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.

When Oliver Cromwell visited the old cathedral at York, England, he saw, in as many niches, the statues of the twelve apostles in solid silver. "What are they doing there ?" he asked. When told, he said, "Take them down, melt and mint them into coins for the treasury, then scatter them over the kingdom among the poor, and so let them, like their master, go about doing good."

The church of Christ, with its vast and ever-increasing membership, is rapidly learning that there should be but one *design* in all toil and labor, viz.: “That we may have to give to him that needeth,” and gladly is the thought which is enwrapped in this inspired sentence, being written upon every penny and purse, bond and bank-book, ledger and safe, heart and home, of the Christ-loving, everywhere. O! there is a *luxury* in doing good! There is also a *loss* in failing to do good, when an opportunity is offered. A loss? Yes! and worse, far; for,

“He is dead, whose hand is not open wide
To help the need of a human brother;
But he doubles the strength of his life-long ride,
Who gives of his wealth in love to another;
And a thousand million lives are his
Who carries the world in his sympathies.”

“O, there are unused millions rolled up and put away as hoarded treasure. Soon; yes, very soon would the world be privileged to greet the millennial morn, if, only some power, human or divine, would touch, uncoil, and send out these unused millions as ray-streams of light in this benighted sphere. O!

for some such power that will break the bands of these gold baskets, loose their glittering contents and send them sparkling everywhere, and so flood the world with help and hope that needy and suffering humanity shall rejoice, and thus shall the names of the good and righteous be held in everlasting remembrance !

Christian convert, do not narrow your thought and actions on lines of benevolence ! Be broad, generous, God-like ; act for the ages to come, as well as for the present !

Let every deed be prompted by far-reaching, benevolent plans, which shall touch the remotest corners of the globe, and thrill with gratitude the most distant limit of time.

Look backward ! along the history of the past ! Forward ! among the problems of the future ! downward ! on the generations to come ! and thus anticipate the results of your offerings, in hastening onward the final triumph of the Lord.

The following fable-story is full of suggestive thought to every contemplative mind. Years ago a

wealthy but selfish man, conceived the idea of putting his name where it would be *remembered forever*; so write it, and in such a place, that it would never be forgotten.

Away to the forest of ages he went, and, after carefully viewing many giant oaks, at last selected the one which to his mind seemed most likely to endure. Deep in its massive trunk he carved his name, and, with much satisfaction gazed upon it and said: "There will my name stand forever." But, only a little time elapsed when the arm-bared wood-man came with shouldered ax, sized the trees of the forest, and felled, first, the very one upon which the name of "Mr. Selfish" had been carved, and as the oak fell, his name fell with it, and would soon have been forgotten, but for the quick thought which led him to construct and build, a huge granite monument, on whose top-stone he chiseled deep his name." "There," said he, "I know it will stand forever," but alas! A storm was brewing; the heavens grew black; the firmament was livid with the flashes of pent-up storm-fires. The war-horses of the storm

scud across the sky and shook the rain-drops from their shaggy mane; the crash and boom of rumbling thunders came tumbling down from the arches of the skies; and a single stray flash, leaping from out the frowning cloud, shattered his pile of granite, and hid his carefully carved name in the ruins at the base of the shaft his selfish pride had built.

“What! shall I be thus defeated in my purpose! No! no!” he said, and he left with the determination of seeking the highest mountain, which he climbed wearily to its summit and on the largest boulder of the topmost peak he carved again his name, saying, “These are the everlasting hills, and here, what is written, will abide.” Alas! for him. Only a few months passed when lo! the earth trembled, the ocean was convulsed, and the mountains reeled and staggered like drunken men, for an earth-quake, was at its play, and the world was rent, and broken, and mis-placed, and the name so deep-carved, in rock so high, on mount so sure, was forever hidden out of sight, in the mountain-rock fragments of the valley.

In grief and disappointment he turned away

toward home and said in reverie as he walked along the streets of his native city, disappointed and chagrined, "Oaks, granite, and mountain have failed me! There is no place, where my name can be written, so as to be known, and remembered forever." Just then a poor, ragged, and half-starved child, of his own town, stepped before him, and holding up her pale, thin, hands, she said in pleading voice: "Please, Sir, give me one penny, to buy bread for my dying mother; she is starving; Sir; Please! His usual selfishness was about to rise and roughly tell her to "begone! you beggar" when a second, and generous thought lead him to hand her a penny.

What tears of thoughtfulness flowed from her eyes, as she looked up into his face, with a smile of gratitude, and said, "Please Sir! will you tell me your name?" "My name!" said he, in surprise, "Why do you wish to know my name?" "Because Sir, my dying mamma said that some day I would go to heaven, and, there live, forever! and I want to know your name, so that I can tell Jesus how kind

you were to me and my starving mamma, and he will know you when you come to live there forever.” Ah! the tender chord of the man’s soul had been struck by the artless and thankful child, and as he turned his head aside to brush away the unbidden tears, he said to himself, “At last! at last! I have found out how, and where, to put my name so that it will be remembered forever, and, by God’s help, hereafter I will seek to do all I can for the needy around me, and thus carve my name in the immortal memories from which it can never fade!!”

There are unnumbered men and women, who, by beautiful, yet unostentatious deeds of charity are carving their names upon the heart of the world carving them so deep that there are not waters enough in the sea; nor fires enough in the sun; no! nor forces enough in nature, to disturb, disfigure, or destroy them! They are there; and there written, to be remembered, forever!

Go! Young follower of Jesus, and break thy treasure-box of spikenard, at the feet, head, hand, and heart, of the world’s hope, and, as thy odorous

gifts ascend and fill the world with sweetness, mankind will bless God for the influence which you have exerted, and, should no sculptured marble designate your burial-spot, your loving deeds will be an *eternal memorial*, the remembrance of which shall be *preserved in heaven*, and, their record kept on high!! How! shall I break, and where, and why, do you ask? Let God answer! “Draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted, then shall *thy light shine in obscurity* and *thy darkness be as noonday*, and the *Lord shall guide thee continually and satisfy thy soul* in drought, and thou shalt be like a garden in which springs of water *fail not.*”

IN MEMORY OF THE CONVERTS AND FRIENDS
WHO HAVE TRIUMPHANTLY FALLEN "ASLEEP
IN JESUS," TO WAKE, AND EVER-LIVE AMID
THE PURE UPPER-WORLD GLORIES.

R. S. M.

IMMORTAL FRIENDS.

Dead!

O! No! Friends are not dead!
Those friends of by-gone years,
In Christ they sleep, lift up your head,
And brush away your tears.

Dead!

O! No! lives so sublime !
So clear, and strong, so free!
Such lives can never end in time
They live eternally!

They live!

Which ever way we turn,
A thousand thoughts flit past ;
For, stored in memory's sacred urn
Is treasured all the past!

They live!

Deep-marked on memory's scrolls
Are many deeds of love,
Reminding of those noble souls
Once here ! Now live above !

Light!

Does not die, though sun has set!
It shines on other worlds !
There, tower, spire and minaret
Gleam like myriad pearls.

So these!

Our friends do ever live!
E'en as the setting sun,
Full many a ray to earth doth give,
Though mankind says " 'Tis gone."

We do not!

See them in the tomb!
O'er covered with earth's sod,
Nor are they wrapped in future gloom,
They live in light with God!

Weep not!

Behold that royal host!
Redeemed by blood divine,
Forever dwell they on the coast
Where God's immortals shine.

Farewell!

Blest spirits, rise on high!
Thou didst but quit thy clay.
We will not grieve! thou didst not die!
Soon we shall tread your way.

Welcome!

Blest morn! when on the wings!
Of Christian hope and faith we fly
With thee! From youth's immortal springs,
Drink! Who drinks shall never die!

ALL DISCOURAGEMENT IS FROM THE DEVIL.

DISCOURAGEMENTS.

Discouragements are found in every pathway!
You have found them in your own!

Your eyes, are now seeing, for the first time, the difficulties, dangers, and anxieties, that have touched other souls. Jacob! was discouraged and cried out "all these things are against me." Elijah! was discouraged, and under the shadow of the Juniper-tree requested death for himself, saying "It is enough, O! Lord, take away my life." Jonah! was discouraged and so deeply disappointed that he, twice cried out, "It is better for me to die than to live."

Fretful Jacob! Fearful Elijah! Foolish Jonah! For Jacob, God was silently turning the wheels of providence in a direction that would eventually and inevitably lead the disheartened patriarch to see his son Joseph Prime-Minister of all Egypt! but, he could not know, and did not trust, and so became discouraged.

God was preparing for Elijah, a new revelation of divine-forces, in which if necessary, all nature was to be stirred, shaken, and rent asunder, to show him that God was near. Wind! earth-quake! fire! voice! all were to be utilized to scatter the gloom from the soul of the prophet, and give him assurance that from the foolish oath of a wicked Jezebel, there was nothing for him to fear. God led him to see his folly in giving away to distrust and discouragements, and once more, Elijah becomes himself, rises from the gloom, wraps himself around with his mantle, and, goes forth to talk with God.

It was God's design to teach Jonah a great and lasting lesson of mercy, but, it was all in vain! Unlike the patriarch or prophet, he would not look, listen, or learn, himself, nor was he willing that the Ninevites should live.

Sea! sun! gourd! and grace! could not break the spell of chagrin and gloom that had settled upon his soul, and, so far as we know, he died disappointed and discouraged, saying "I do well to be angry, even unto death." Foolish man! To die, thus, in the

presence of a God, so good, gracious, and powerful.

If a man *will* rise above discouragements, then, by the help of God, he *may!* If he *won't*, then, all outside forces are impotent, and, of necessity, he is left to go the way of his own choosing and, in all the future, move through dreary and ever-darkening days, days that will be as nights, and nights, that will be as years. Seasons of trial may come, but be not dismayed by them, for, to the trusting soul, they sometimes become the best educators, and, such a soul, can sometimes, *see farther through a tear, than a telescope.* Already, perhaps, you have been *looking at the encamped hosts of the enemy around you instead of looking up and beholding the mountains full of the chariots of the Lord.*

Possibly you have taken time to measure the strength of the enemy, but, have forgotten to measure the length of the arm of God which upholds you. Or, so long have you gazed at the walls of Jerico, and so little at the throbbing-forces of Omnipotence, that your difficulties appear insur-

mountable, and in soul grief, feeling that you are about to be vanquished, you have raised the Israelitish cry of despair." "All the land is full of giants, and, the cities are walled up to heaven."

Not so! discouraged one! your difficulties are not more numerous, than others have been, your dangers not more dreadful, nor are the waters through which you are now-passing, deeper! Your mistake has been, as that of the Dothan-youth, who, looking, only, at the Syrian-hosts encircling him, and, comparing his strength with theirs, cried out "Alas! Master we perish," when Elisha-like, he should have *counted God in* and sang with heaven-born confidence "They that be with us, are more than they that be with them."

Instead of looking through eyes of trust, to him, who commands the armies of the upper-worlds, you have gazed long, and, with ever-increasing alarm; through the goggles of grief and gloom under whose double-magnifying force, molehills have appeared as mountains; pebbles as boulder-rocks; and, dwarfs whose height, a child could measure with

a two-foot rule, have risen to warrior-giants, whose helmets seemed to touch the stars.

The gathering clouds ! what are they ! They are not the massing of inimical forces, collecting to crowd down upon and destroy you. No ! No ! By faith in God you may see them, gilded in splendor by the glorifying-rays of the sun's touch, start upward and heavenward, suddenly changed into hurrying chariots-of-gold, upon which, one would be glad to step, and, roll up to the crystal sea of heaven. The outflashing lights of these clouds, what are they ! They are not the drawn swords of angry gods, ready to thrust you through ! they are not leaping-tongues of living flame dashing around to destroy you ! No ! by faith, you may look up and see them as prancing steeds champing their golden-bits, and pawing the cloud-valleys at their feet, in their eagerness to ascend and bear you away into the presence immortal. Yes ! More, you may follow them up into the splendid city of God, even as Elijah did his cloud-chariot and chargers of fire, which lifted him up and away from the banks of Jordan, leaving the

astonished servant to gather up the sacred mantle of his ascending master, which in folds of splendor fell at his feet.

Every great and successful character of the past has had difficulties similar to or greater than your own. Obstacles, thick as a dragon's teeth have risen in their pathway. These they considered, but, only considered long enough to measure their real strength which, when they had done, they fearlessly advanced to crush them. *They counted upon difficulties, they counted also upon success!* and under the inspiration of possible future victories they went forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners."

They never allowed themselves to become discouraged by the magnitude of duties which rose before them, nor, by the incompleteness of those already done. With a burning desire for the right, and an implicit confidence in the upper-world forces, which constantly uplifted and bore them onward, they moved forward and upward to lasting success, and by their unselfish and daring

movements, cut deep their names on historic tablets, where they will remain forever, and be acknowledged as men whose thought and hope were fixed on objects far above the discouraging dangers at their feet.

Indeed! every human life is beset and besieged by trials, vexations and hinderances, which may wreck the weakling, but which, to every true man, only serves to develop new resources and wake up latent powers, for future and more terrific conflicts. Men of force and usefulness have often found sorrows to be their best educators, and have, we repeat, frequently *seen farther through a tear than a telescope*. The deeds of gallant bravery by Cæsar and Charlemagne, by Cromwell and Napoleon, stirred the world at the time of their performance and marked new eras on history's page.

They were men of invincible courage! Nothing could daunt their spirit, or, long obstruct their way. Were they met with superior numbers? Then, they applied superior skill. Were they defeated in battle? Then, they rose in new-born strength, and, turned defeat into victory.

Here is an instance:

At one time the Marshals of Napoleon came to their commander, and, in great alarm, said: "We have lost the battle and are being cut to pieces!"

The great General glanced at his watch and said in reply:

"It is only two o'clock in the afternoon—you have lost a battle, but we have time to win another. Charge! Charge! upon the foe!!" While adversity is always a bitter draught, yet, it is very frequently the stern nurse of wisdom, in whose arms have been tended and taught, some of the strongest and most influential characters history has ever known, many of whom looking back over their line of life would be compelled to say,

The hours of pain have yielded good
Which prosperous days refused,
As herbs, though scentless when entire,
Spread fragrance when they're bruised.

Shall we, as Christians, have less courage in life's battles than men of the world? No! rather we may make the difficulties which might discourage others,

the means of bringing out all the heroic qualities of a noble Christian soul.

By these very adversities, we should learn self-denial and endurance, and cultivate, in these seasons of discouragements, a noble, Christ-like indifference, such as is indispensable to highest manhood, for, the moral fibers, thus developed, is a requisite of a useful, prosperous, Christian life.

The Psalmist must first be able to say "We went through fire and water" before he could triumphantly sing "but the Lord hath brought us out into a wealthy place." Not only the Psalms, but, indeed many poems of the past deal largely with the troubled lives of the great and the good, and, their very strain of sadness is often the poem's greatest charm.

We are all living under the law of contrasts, of lights and shadows, and, however irritating it may be to the ardent spirit of youth, we must yet learn, even if slowly, that, the causes of discouragement, may, under God, be turned into head-streams of victory, and, may often become, the means whereby, we are led to the grandest triumphs.

He, who would sing divinest songs, and, fill the world with sweetest melodies, must go down into deepest water-floods, pass through hottest fires, and, spend blood-sweating hours in Gethsemane!

Truth was never more beautifully and clearly expressed than in the adjoining poetic thought, which says:

As the grape must be crushed before
Can be gathered the glorious wine;
So the poet's heart must be *wrung to the core*
Ere his song can be divine.

The Christian soul which would be best prepared to solve life's problems, and, satisfactorily perform life's duties, may expect "Contrary winds," even "Euroclydon" to strike his pathway. Indeed! until Gennesaret's billows beat against our soul's craft, and each wave rise up as if to engulf us, and the despairing "Master, Master, carest thou not that we perish," touch our lips, we can not perceive the royal majesty that sits upon the brow of Christ, nor, realize what omnipotent forces are wrapped up in the words of him who is "in the hinder-part of the ship asleep on a pillow."

Says, Addison, "The gods, in bounty, work up storms about us that give mankind occasion to exert their hidden strength, and throw out into practice, virtues that shun the day, and lie concealed in the smooth seasons and calms of life."

As many gems glisten and flash in the darkness more than in the light, so, there are pearls of divine brilliancy at all other times invisible, and which are discovered by us only in hours of temptation's darkness.

When life seems almost undermined by disappointment and misfortune, then, it is, that, by a noble, god-like effort, we may with heroic and precious deeds, overlay the petty annoyances of life and by this method, either hide them altogether, or change their loathsomeness into positive beauty.

After all, it is the rough work that forms and polishes gems, from their crude, natural state into objects of blazing beauty. Pebbles; rough, ill-shaped, and angular, and by no means beautiful, may be found anywhere inland away from the storms, but, if you would find the beautifully rounded

and polished pebbles, you must go to that rock-lined shore where long white lines of breakers come rolling in from the agitated deep, and toss and rattle, round and polish, the pebbles of the storm-beaten strand.

That landscape is not most beautiful, that has in it only gaudy, flashing, colors, nor, do artists, and trained eyes generally, value a picture by the number of its brilliant tintings, for, they know, that, to make a really beautiful picture there is required the black cloud! as well as the bright sunshine! the cold mountain-peak in the distance, as well as the pure crystal spring at their feet; the rocky shore, as well as the wide sweeping plain; the apparently useless under-growth, as well as the massive, towering oak.

As it is in nature; so, it is in art! as in art; so, in grace! For perfection, there is required the beating storm-wave of the sea; the black-lined cloud of the sky, and the sharp-edged knife of the diamond cutter. Contrasted beauty is always attractive! In what sometimes seems to us, hard-dealing, there, God has no end in view but to beautify, polish,

and perfect His people, to make of them gems, a royal-setting for His eternal crown.

If we will, we may learn a lesson of trust from what the poets call, “The Nebel meer or *golden sea-cloud of Swiss-Land!*” It is a dense mass of clouds stretching away to the farthest verge of the horizon, even as one continuous sea. Viewed from the earth’s level, it is seen only as banks of piled up darkness, but, witnessed from the summit of Mt. Faulhorn, which, rises above the clouds, and looking down from these heights, behold! it is dazzling in its brightness and radiant with the splendors of Eastern sun. From earth’s side, gloom! from heaven’s side, Golden!

It is but a repetition, in form, of the god-sent pillar of cloud and fire, which though one and the selfsame thing, was, to the Egyptians, on one side, *darkness*, and, to Israel, on the other side, *light*. So in the dark, disagreeable, discouraging, events of life, the worldling, may see naught but a frowning Providence while the King’s sons behold a father’s smiling face.

O ! to learn the art in life's distressing hours, of trusting much, and trembling little, saying in such seasons :

Courage my soul, thy God is wise,
Be like him ; Be not sad !
But Phoenix-like from fires rise
In new strength, yea ! beauty clad !

O ! Be not discouraged, though thy lot may seem hard, for the very things, which drag thy spirit down, may be *disguised blessings*. They may be but the thin outer and bitter rind, of the inner, luscious and wholesome fruit, which, as yet, may be hidden away by this nauseous covering.

Just as an experienced hand at the loom, throws in rags of all colors, lengths, and kinds, but, eventually from all this tangled, and vari-colored rag-mass, weaves a beautiful and useful pattern, so, God, may be weaving, the disagreeable, many-shaded, and, seemingly tangled experiences of your life, into a beautiful, well-formed plot, upon which, eventually, you will look with satisfaction and delight.

Jacob, was never more disheartened, and broken-spirited, than, when alone in the desert-land, away

from home and friends, weary and tired, in body and mind he lay him down to rest. The earth, was his bed ! the sky, his coverlet ! and, for a pillow, he used a stone ! Surely, here were sufficient causes for discouragement ! Yet, in this hour of combined, distressing circumstances he had the most thrilling, and sublime, experience of his life, for, here, he was wrapped in the visions of the infinite, and here, he witnessed, what none other had ever witnessed, "Angels descending, and ascending, on a heaven-dropt ladder, with foot, resting on the earth, and top, touching the throne of heaven.

All nature is full of electricity, and yet, sparks of electric splendor are seldom seen, save, when there is severe and constant friction ! so ; the visions of God are many and splendid, yet, are they seldom seen save by those eyes and hearts which are rubbed hard by the emery-stone of affliction.

The truth is that every man who has visibly been influenced for good, the times, in which he lived, has had his discouraging; tragical; trying hours; and you, young disciple, need not be taken unawares should such hours come to you.

They will come! for, your life, without them, would be incomplete, as compared with the life of Jesus who was "made perfect through suffering." God is with thee in all these things! He knows thy heart! and as the master-musician knows in which notes the sweetest melodies exist, and touches when, and where, he pleases to reach the desired chord, so, God! knows well which keys to strike in the human soul in order to bring out the most perfect harmonies.

O! that we all may learn to say in the sweet submission of another;

Strike! Thou the Master! we thy keys
The anthem of thy destinies.
The minor of thy loftier strain
Our heart shall breathe the old refrain
"Thy will be done."

Chautauqua!* That increasingly-famous and deservedly-loved "Hall in the grove" has a trio of inspiring mottoes beautifully engraved upon each diploma.

So encouraging is each of the mottoes that it requires wise discrimination to choose between them,

*The author is a C. I. S. C. graduate "Progressive class 1886."

yet, if the task were ours we should select that one, where two visible human hands are firmly clasped, covered with a third invisible hand (the hand of God), and where two voices blend in sweet harmony as they say each to the other what I now desire to say to you, dear convert,

“*Never be Discouraged*” for, though;

In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence he’ll bring thee forth more bright ;
He will never cease to love thee,
Thou art precious in his sight ;
God IS with thee!

GOD THINE EVERLASTING LIGHT.

“WE MEASURE JESUS BY THE LIGHT HE
HAS SHED UPON THE WORLD.”

Rev. J. H. Brookes, D.D.

CHRIST AND CHRISTMAS.

'Tis Christmas day ! Hail, happy morn,
Our thoughts speed far away
Where Christ the world's sole hope was born
As seraphs sang their lay.

Why? happy morn ! why term it thus !
Or celebrate his birth !
Hath aught of good been added us
In Christ's advent to earth ?

Good ! O, yes ! All good we say
He, to the world, is this;
The Life ! the Truth ! the perfect Way !
That leads to lasting bliss.

He is, in all men's lives and times,
The hope, for world's to come ;
He binds mankind in moral lines,
Gives each, that seeks, a home !

A myriad million happy hearts
With joy, leap high, to-day !
And the tear of welcome, eyeward starts
As the children homeward stray.

Our Christ ! and Christmas ! Joyous words !
Which, every heart doth thrill,
Beside which cord, sweet nightingale's
Is but discordant trill.

Hail! happy morn! thrice-welcome thou!
In this, thine oft return;
Neglect of thee; or Christ; from now
We'll ever, quickly spurn.

“GIVE ATTENDANCE TO READING * * *
* * * THAT THY PROFITING MAY APPEAR TO
ALL.”

Paul.

READING AND READERS.

Every generation has had its great, thoughtful, and profoundly intellectual men !

Like all other men, these in their turn, have gone away, but unlike other men, they have left volumes of imperishable thoughts, which live and will continue to live, an inspiration, to every ambitious soul following in their track.

These giant intellects have scattered all along their pathway, thought-jewels, that flash out light and help which, even, the lowliest of earth may secure as their own.

Every convert should be a reader, and, as a Christian, feel a moral responsibility for what he reads, for, consciously, or unconsciously, our reading becomes a part of our thought, and "as a man thinketh, so is he," hence, in a measure at least, the character of a man is as the character of his reading.

That, "we become like those with whom we

associate," is as applicable to our reading, as to our conversation, or companions, therefore, let us read only, and always, the best thoughts, of purest writers. Such are easy of access, and, so abundant that they fall around us thick as the autumnal leaves of a wind-shaken tree, and numerous as the winter snow-flakes fluttering in the air.

However poor you may be, or humble your dwelling, you may, for the fewest pence have for your companions the tallest intellects of the past! Through books, Milton will come back and rëstanza his "Paradise Lost!" Through the same medium, life will be dramatically portrayed by "Shakespeare!" and "Franklin!" will rëgive, by the score, those practical, terse, and everyday-useful facts couched in his habitual short sentence, which, went as straight to the heart of human-kind as the arrow of the never-failing-marksman, sped toward, and, struck the target's centre.

We are living in an age of wonders! An age, in which, we speed across continents with almost alarming rapidity, tracking hard upon the heels of

the iron horse, which goes leaping over every hill-top, and, bounding down into every valley, or, with a piercing search of apparent delight, flies, as if on wings, over the trestled ravines, from mountain to mountain-top.

A single telephonic wire stretched to its utmost tension bears on its unseen wings, our voice, to friends afar, and, whether, we laugh or weep; sing or sigh; it is ever ready to carry our message, and, in its flight, reveal not a word, save to the ear we send it. Electrics! flash out from their suspended towers, and, instantaneously, turn darkness into day, and by their beauty, brilliancy, and numbers, almost lead the uninitiated to think that a *million new-moons* are shining on the city.

In our day mountains are tunneled! bridges suspended! and, cars are cabled! Truly, this is a sublime age, of sublimer wonders! A myriad marvels come trooping up in such rapid succession that they tread, each upon the heels of the other, and, if we keep abreast of our age, and keep step to the music of the times in which we live, we must read, and,

read much from the heaven-guided pens of the sterling christian men and women rising up on every side.

All along the Nile-banks of Egypt are found fragments of mammoth statuary, and, remains of vast structures, which, are but the wrecks and remnants of former splendor, which once towered high on Afric-plains, or, lifted their strong forms from the “delta of the Nile!” but, they fell at last in ruins, for, the Nitre-of-the-Nile, a corroding, disintegrating element of the waters had been for ages; centuries; and decades; silently, eating away their base, and, when, the subsidence came, there was a crash of alarm, and, the former pathway of splendor was now a track of ruins!

A lack of intelligence, resulting from a failure to read, has been the ruin of what would otherwise have been a noble and useful soul, and, if neglect on this line is continued it may yet sap the foundations of individual, Church, and State! Every young Christian should keep himself informed on all important topics.

In your search after information steer clear of all the loose-jointed ; light-weighted ; faith-questioning ; writers of your day. Such, are they, who have sent upon the world a flood of false ideas and by an assumed brilliancy, have supplanted the nobler thoughts of former and better years. Avoid them ! look not upon them ! turn from them ! and, pass away ! for, ultimately they hack the soul, and, though in time, the hack-wound may overheal, yet, *the scar is always there !*

You can never entirely get away from the influence and effects of a wrong-spirited and unwholesome paper ; book ; or magazine ! Like the under-garment of ancient "Nessus," *it will not away*, it remains forever, *a clinging curse*.

Do you ask "What shall we read ?" To this query no specific reply can be given. Each person must choose according to his surroundings ; his capacity to grasp ideas ; and, his ability to secure his choice.

In our day a thousand book-jewels flash on every hand, and, amid their brilliancy, beauty, and worth

one is confused, and, with difficulty decides which to select. There are writers, historic! Writers, synthetic! Writers, analytic! Writers, ancient! Writers, modern! Writers, prose! Writers, poetic! and these all, flash like meteors; shine like comets; and burn like blazing suns! In the modern book-world, it is no exaggeration to say, these valuable helpers, are myriads! Indeed! the prodigality of rich, racy, readable material, is the marvel of our day.

Let us not pick weeds, when we may have lilies, nor pluck a thorn, when a rose is as near; or inhale a stench when we may breathe aromas which rise from flowers that grow in the gardens of God. No! Let us cull only the choicest from earth's literary conservatories, and, in all our reading, study, and thought, keep close to our heart, the Holy Book of God, the precious, precious Bible.

Whatever else you read or fail to read neglect not this guide of the youthful; the strength of the strong man; and the staff of the aged pilgrim! Here, the most vital truths are wrapped up in the shortest sentences! Here, the grandest doctrines

with which man has ever had to deal, are couched in briefest phrase. Here, are pages radiant with spiritual light, and letters that quiver with living power.

Other books may have sparks of divine fire, this ! blazes majestic like the sun ! Others, like a dim and distant star, may cast a little light on the world, this ! floods the world like Ossian ! Others, may be a crevice through which the light *tries* to force its way. This is a *wide-open door* through which it rolls in splendor ! Yes ! this is the *Candle of the Lord ! The Star of Eternity ! The lamp from off God's everlasting throne !*

The piled-up wisdom of the ages is enfolded in its utterances and, he ! who would be wise ; must here learn ! he ! who would be strong ; must here feast ! he ! who would be refreshed must here drink.

In the pages of that volume, and in their true substance, of which they are but the shadow, is the elixir which confers immortal youth upon him who is brave enough, and pure enough, to kiss and quaff the golden draught.

Intellectual and spiritual gold-dust, which may

be had for the mere stooping and gathering, is scattered all over its surface, and, all through its pages are truths, that, glisten even, for the careless ones, but there are treasure-mines hidden away from careless eyes, and, never revealed, save to those who seek for them as for silver, and search for them as for hidden gold.

Indeed ! Of the Bible we may say much more than the Abbie Winkleman said of that matchless statue, "The Apollo of the Vatican."

Go, and study it, and, if you see no peculiar beauty in it to captivate you, go again ; and should you still discern nothing, go *again* ; and ~~AGAIN~~ ; and ~~AGAIN~~ ; for, be assured it is there !!

The same starry heavens are pictured upon the eye of the superstitious savage as upon that of the scientific astronomer, but, O ! how much more one sees in them than the other. An untaught child, and a skillful engineer gaze upon the same beautiful steamer, riding majestically over crest, billow, and wave, but one sees vastly more than the other, of the power, laws, and uses of each separate part, and of their relations as parts to the whole.

Look up into the firmament ! It is full of night-gems, of which, one careless glance will reveal many ! Look long, and steadily, and lo ! You see many more ! Call, now, to your aid a telescope, which leads back ; *back* ; *BACK* ; into the myriad fields of more than myriad light-gems, and each look will be rewarded with star-beauties, the numbers increasing proportionately with the time, extent, and depth of the search.

If this be true of stars in the firmament, much more is it true of the sparkling gems of thought, which glisten ; flash ; and smile ; in every verse of the Bible. It is full of springs, which, if but touched will unlock hidden truths of sterling worth, yet, they are springs which respond and act, only, when touched by anxious ; penetrating ; godly minds ; and, much as such minds derive from it, not even these can take its full measure, for it compasses heaven and earth ; time and eternity ; and undertakes the more than Herculean task of teaching man his duty ; destiny ; and the character of his God ! All over its pages should be written in letters of light the

word, "Infinite," and, on our lips should ever dwell the Psalmist's prayer, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law."

Wondrous things are there! God has put in those pages more beauty than man can ever see! Yet! If we look long enough, and our hearts are pure enough, and our study sufficiently intense, we shall be rewarded with thoughts divine and lessons more than human. It is the unfailing fount of Wisdom!! Whittier, in his beautiful poem, "The Vaudois Teacher," puts words upon the lips of the "old peddler," which give his own thought of their value, as he calls the Bible "The Gem of purest lustre," the pearl of greatest price!" These are Whittier's words:

O! lady fair, these silks of mine are beautiful and rare,
The richest web of the Indian loom, which beauty's queen might
wear;
And my pearls are pure as thy own fair neck with whose radiant
light they vie;
I have brought them with me a weary way—Will my gentle lady
buy?

And the lady smiled on the worn old man through the dark and clustering curls,
Which veiled her brow as she bent to view his silks and glittering pearls;
And she placed their price in the old man's hand and lightly turned away,
But she paused at the wanderer's earnest call—"My gentle lady, stay!"

"O lady fair! I have yet a gem which a purer lustre flings,
Than the diamond flash of the jewelled crown on the lofty brow
of kings—
A wonderful pearl of exceeding price, whose virtue shall not decay;
Whose light shall be as a spell to thee and a blessing on thy way!"

The lady glanced at the mirroring steel where her form of grace
was seen,
Where her eye shone clear and her dark locks waved, their clasping pearls between;
"Bring forth thy pearl of exceeding worth, thou traveler gray and old—
And name the price of thy precious gem, and my page shall count
thy gold."

The cloud went off from the pilgrim's brow, as a small and meager book,
Unchased with gold or gem of cost from his folding robe he took
"Here, lady fair, is the pearl of price, may it prove as such to thee!
Nay—keep thy gold—I ask it not, for the *Word of God is free!*"

The hoary traveler went his way but the gift he left behind
Has had its pure and perfect work on that high-born maiden's
mind,
And she hath turned from the pride of sin to the lowness of
truth,
And given her human heart to God in its beautiful hour of youth!

And she hath left the gray old halls where an evil faith had
power,
The courtly knights of her father's train and the maidens of her
bower:
And she hath gone to the Vaudois vales by lordly feet untrod
Where the poor and needy of earth are rich in the perfect sight
of God!

Yes! Here! in the book of God is the highest
set of truths, ever given to the world; Truths! in
which the story of human life is drawn out to its
fullest lengths, forcing the conviction upon the mind
of every candid reader, that, life, touching as it
does, all the past, present, and future, is loaded with
responsibilities which weighten as we near the Judg-
ment Day. Again, I say, young convert **READ**
YOUR BIBLE!

This counsel-giving chapter on reading would cer-
tainly be incomplete, did I not urge you as a young
Christian to be also a careful and constant reader

of the literature published by the denomination of which you are a member. If you would know its doctrines, usages, and enterprises, you must read its books, papers, magazines, and pamphlets, for here, and here only, is its progress at home and abroad, its ministry and membership, its victories and defeats, all discussed at length and in fairness. Here! are spread out as a panorama, all the great enterprises of the particular church, to which you are solemnly pledged, before God, and the great congregation. Here! are printed ideas which go flying through the world, and in their flight mould, in some measure, every public thought. Here! is wisdom flashing from the pens of godly men whose published thoughts are an inspiration to every truly zealous servant of Christ. Read the religious, denominational publications of the church of which you are a part.

Generally, the chief of a Christian editorial staff is the strong man among his fellows, one, in whose hands truth blazes like a torch, and falls like sparks upon powder; one, who thinks for himself, and, for

the age in which he lives, measurably guides its thought, and, thus inspires it to act on solid principles.

Because he has been regarded as a chief among his equals, therefore, he has been taken from the pulpit or platform, presidency or professorship where he has long addressed hundreds, and put in a position, where, through the columns of book, magazine, pamphlet, and paper, he may now speak to tens of thousands.

They are usually men of remarkable firmness of character; deep thought; and full of heaven-inspired boldness, which leads them to attack the wrong, and defend the right, whether of friend or foe, in church or out.

For a week; month; or quarter; according to their publication, they watch the movements of a world, and after a careful survey of world-facts, viewed from the higher summits of a Christian experience, they write their richest editorial comments.

Religious periodicals are not the dull, prosy, insipid, fireless stuff, that some persons who never

read them suppose they are. They are full of interest! influence! and information! In all their columns there are seen sparks of holy fire, leaping in every direction, from the anvil of the editor, whose brawny arm, strong brain, and Christian heart, has been carefully penning these fire-lines of light; help; and blessing!

What papers do you take is a question crowded to the front by many a faithful pastor, and, if all the answers, given to such a query, could be published and preserved, they would form a curious and sometimes very inconsistent medley for Christian homes.

Papers! Books! Magazines! Tracts! O! how abundant! So numerous have they become that they fall thick as snow-flakes at our door, fall in great abundance, yet of the pure type there is not one too many, nor do they come too often, though they come at all *times*. How many there are! Dailies! Weeklies! Monthlies! And Quarterlies! And at all prices! From the one-penny daily of the great city, to the most beautiful, costly, illustrative,

and attractive monthly. There are papers for all persons, all policies, and all professions. Papers which discuss all phases, and, look at all sides, of the legal, medical, educational, scientific and commercial world! It is by this means the world keeps familiar with its own affairs, and, by this same means Christians may, and, should, be familiar with the triumphs, doctrines, and methods of the Church.

Indeed! Every Christian home should be supplied with a good, live, spiritual, church paper. I say, *church papers*, because while the county, state, and national literature which reaches our homes, may be full of needed information, yet, there can be but very little space devoted to church interests or the publication of facts which show the onward march of Messiah's Kingdom.

More than this; while there are many editors of secular papers who have a desire to comment on the rapid roll of Christ's chariot, they dare not speak out their sublimest thoughts; nor utter their deepest convictions, for, well do they know that all their readers are not Christians, and, such, they think, must

not be offended, and, so thinking, they regretfully smother in birth, the noblest, divinest, thoughts ever conceived in their minds. Not so with the Christian men who sit in the editorial chairs of church publications. Their deepest conviction, their sublimest, thought, their fullest expression may be written, and will be accepted by the Christian millions into whose hands and homes they fall. They, and they only, dare to draw real life-like sketches which set the blood on fire with noble purpose and lead others to reach up after the Being who has given to the writers themselves, nobility ; breadth ; power ; and inspiration !

As we read the columns written by these men of God and partake of the richness and sweets which continually drip from their pen and press, we are led to think "Bees have been alighting on their lips" even as it is reported they did on the lips of the Athenian Plato. These godly writers incessantly feed us with the "finest of wheat and honey out of the rock," by heralding thoughts original, and striking, or throwing out rousing truths that are new to

their generation ; truths ! whose value, the receding ages, shall in no way impair. This combined influence of pen and press in the hands of Christian men and women is the most marvelous moral machinery ever set in motion ! Thoughts are no longer restricted to an oral address, or, a single assembly, but as if by magic, they transfer their one thought to a million minds, every hour teaching all homes, and, thus they give hope to the weary, help to the discouraged, and at the same time rouse the wicked with their thunder-notes of alarm.

The printing-press is a silent means, but, it is rapid as the winds that sweep over continents, and its management we place in the hands and on the hearts of our mightiest men ; men, whom we have reason to believe will rightly educate the on-coming generations of the church, and, mould, in large measure, the public sentiment of millions who are, as yet, unreached by the living voice of pulpit or platform. Read then, the best, and the best only, and *avoid as you would the scorpion, the flood of highly-seasoned, cheap, and chaffy literature, which has*

come rolling down, upon this modern age, with more than torrent-force!

Do you ask “*How shall we read?*” There are two ways “*dipping and diving*,” which might be, not inaptly, compared with the water motions of “*seagull and ocean-diver*.” The former, floats gaily above the surface of the sea, and occasionally drops down and wing-tips the waters of the wave, then quickly circles up and away. The latter, is fully prepared, and, plunging into the vast ocean depths, brings up vast treasures that were long hidden there. The passing emigrant stoops to pick up a single gold-flake, by chance found glistening there, while, the resident-miner tears away the soil, picks the clay, and breaks the rock to atoms, till he touch the track of treasure and reach the vein of gold.

Time is occupied by the gold digger in throwing aside the obstructing surface material; so too, the gold-refiner uses time to skim off the surface or alloy, which is but valueless refuse, but that time is used, and, the dross handled by him, only that he may the more clearly see the gold, and, handle the unalloyed, the precious metal; so, all reading should

be carefully guarded, indulging in the lighter literature only when it is absolutely necessary to secure the richer treasure farther down. In all the world's history there has not been known a period, nor seen a time, in which such great possibilities were offered to the young as now.

The present and future are ablaze with radiant prospects! Ten-thousand hands, way-marks, and sign-boards, point out the paths which, lead to a successful realization, a happy termination of all these prospects. They are not the mists of the worldling's horizon, which, ever recedes as you advance, but they are the fixed, great, granite promises of God, which, only await your arrival to make all their blessings thine!

Move on! Young convert, taking as helpers in your christian journey, the beautiful advices from the pens and prints of godly men and women. Associate with, meditate upon, and partake of, their counsels, and, you will find that you have been in-drinking what Goldsmith beautifully describes as:

“ Powers that raise the soul to flame ”

Catch every nerve and vibrate through the frame.”

THE SUN SHALL NO MORE GO DOWN, NEITHER
SHALL THE MOON WITH-DRAW ITSELF, FOR, THE
LORD SHALL BE THINE EVERLASTING LIGHT, AND
THY GOD THY GLORY.

AMERICA'S GOLDEN SUN-SET.

Afar o'er the western hill-tops,
O'er woodland, and water, and meer,
Flashed the bright-tinted beams of the Sun-King
Flinging gladness a'far and a'near.

'Twas the time of the lowing of cattle,
Yea; the time of the birds' evening trill,
When was heard the mad roar of the waters
That had ceased now to grind at the mill.

Every tree-top seemed flaming with splendor,
Each branch appeared dipped in pure gold,
And the hillocks, alike, with the valleys,
Were garbed as in silvery mold.

Not e'en the great arch-way of heaven,
Rainbow'd with its myriad hues,
Seemed half so sublime as our sun-set
With its gold, crimson, garnet, and blues.

'Twas by far a sight more resplendent
Than gold-art that painter e'er seen,
For a'rear the great banks of white cloudlets
Sank, godlike, the sun, as in dream.

Methought, as I saw it far falling,
All brilliant and golden to eye,
Thou art heaven's bright harbinger calling !
To, light greater, that never shall die.

Roll on! Thou bright orb of the heavens !
Speed round! with thy coursers of light,
Till, that sun, ever rising, ne'er setting,
Shall in-welcome millennial light.

CONSCIENCE WILL SURELY SPEAK
THOUGH TONGUES WERE OUT OF USE.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE IS TO THE SOUL
WHAT HEALTH IS TO THE BODY.

“IT IS ASTONISHING HOW SOON THE WHOLE
CONSCIENCE BEGINS TO UNRAVEL IF A SINGLE
STITCH DROPS; ONE SINGLE SIN INDULGED IN,
MAKES A HOLE YOU COULD PUT YOUR HEAD
THROUGH.”

Charles Burton.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

Conscience is a great moral factor universal as the race. It is the religious principle, native to the make-up of man. Cowardice may ask concerning an act, is it safe; expediency, is it politic; and pride ask, is it popular; but a good conscience, never parleys, or banters as to the safety, the expediency, or the popularity of an act. Only one question does it ever ask, namely, *Is it right?* Every life which is directed by a good conscience, has but one single motive, in every deed performed, and that motive is, the rightness of the deed to be performed, and the rightness of the spirit in which it is performed.

Upon conscience there is turned the full light of revelation, and that light is never dim, but, flashes with a brilliancy, sufficient to reveal to every honest observer, the real condition of his own spiritual life. Here, is the divine record, in unmistakable terms,

defining an ignorant conscience; a defiled conscience; a seared conscience; and a good conscience, and, these all will be called and quickened at the final Judgment to show the work of the law written in the hearts of their possessors, accusing, or else excusing, in that day, when God shall judge the secrets of men. O! Conscience! How loud! how clear it speaks! Even as the alarm connected with door and window, signals any evil attempt to assail or enter, so, Conscience, the echo of God in the human soul, forever stands on guard, and, with its native instincts enlightened by divine truth, watches sleeplessly, over every thought and purpose of the life. It is the divine, electric-like thrill which flashes the alarm, when thought or purpose forbidden or wicked seeks to enter the soul, yea, more; it is as the voice of God, speaking with the distinctness and authority of audible speech. Conscience, is the soul's guarding sword-flame, which trembles; wavers; and flashes; to protect its purity, and, he who does not act in the right, and, for the truth, must be often wounded; pierced; cut; and burned.

Conscience, is the appointed vice-gerent of heaven, in inflicting punishment if its commands be not obeyed, or, its warnings be not regarded. It pronounces, and forever reiterates a sentence upon our own conduct. Its penalty is remorse and regret and that penalty will be demanded in full, if its promptings be not heeded.

As a part of God's moral government, it is an admirable device, urging man to the performance of duty, and in case of disobedience, making the mind, in some degree and, for some length of time, its own executioner.

All past historic records, religious and secular, affirm that conscience is a moral susceptibility in man, and, may under the direction of intelligence and will be made better or worse. It may be obeyed and strengthened in truth until it reaches the most tender and sensitive condition on all moral questions, or, it may be neglected and trampled upon, till, like the consciences of the abandoned sinners mentioned in the Pauline letter, it is "seared as with a hot iron," an extremely sad condition leading

to the loss of moral feeling, to which they gradually descend by a continued committal of wrong. O ! that from your lips, dear reader, may often rise the prayer of a saint in the early church :

O ! that my tender soul might fly
The first abhorred approach of ill
Quick as the apple of an eye
The slightest touch of sin to feel.

The pangs inflicted by a guilty conscience will follow the offender into the most secluded retreat ; over-take him in his most rapid flight ; find him out in northern-snows and southern-sands of the equator ; go into the most splendid palaces and there seek out its victim where he thinks he is safe from all the vengeance which man can inflict. Yea ; pursue him even into the dark valley of the shadow of death having arrested him as a fugitive in distant worlds.

David, cried out in anguish of spirit “ My sin is ever before me.” Like a shadow, a spectre, a Phantom, it followed wherever he went. At mid-day, he saw it by the light of meridian sun, and, at mid-

night, he heard its silent tread. His waking hours and dreams, alike, were troubled with an aroused and injured conscience, and so continued, till, he repentingly prayed “Have mercy, upon me, O, God! have mercy upon me; Hide thy face from my sin, and, blot out all mine iniquity.”

What shall be said of him whose aroused conscience ever gnaws, yet he will not repent? There is naught left but torture and agony of mind! Such an one often pales and sickens and wastes away! Perchance, his reason reels, his brain looses its force, and raving, they chain him to a rock, with a pallet of straw upon which to lie, and, alone they leave him till he shall breathe out his existence, an unrepentant, and, unforgiven sinner.

Priest; prophet; or preacher; may not always be made aware of sin in the individual beside him, but, the sinner himself is always cognizant of its presence, for, there is in him, a Nathan-Conscience, which speaks in tones that must be heard, saying “Thou art the man.”

True, all persons are not troubled, alike, with

conscience, in this particular way, but, for them it would be far better if they were, for, if conscience does not check them, sooner or later Justice will, and when Justice, without mercy, shall have been aroused, Conscience-calls will be in vain ! Justice, with grasp infinite, will uplift, and over-hurl them, from the battlements of time, into the shoreless sea, of a remorseful eternity !

Yes ! of all such, it is written "his eyes shall see his destruction, and, he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty." O ! the terrors of that fear which is based upon the consciousness of guilt ! No one can describe it ! None wish to reflect upon it ! Cain, had carved upon his brow, the sin-brand of heaven's wrathstroke, and, this he carried until death, but, the sin-committer of this advanced spiritual age, bears in his mind forever, the wrongs of former years. Conscience can not be bribed ! Conscience will not be quiet ! The individual sin in its separateness may be forgotten, but an outlined remembrance of all, is ever there, and, at the first and faintest call of an awakened, or, reminded conscience, they come troop-

ing up in all their deformity. Yes! for thoughts of by-gone years are lulled in the countless chambers of the brain. Awake but one and lo! What myriads rise! Our thoughts are locked by many a hidden chain. Each stamps its image as the other flies! Jesus, who fully understood the force of conscience, said, to the Pharisees, when they bade him decide the punishment of a frail, and, foolish woman, You know that, for such a sin, the law requires death by stoning, then ask me not to decide, but, rather, "let him that is without sin, cast the first stone." That was enough! Inspiration declares that "they which heard it being convicted by their own consciences went out one by one beginning at the eldest even unto the last."

Conscience, in an instant r  vivified and r  outlined the faults and follies of their own lives and under its lashings they fled from the Silent Savior as though every finger-touch of the stooping ground-writer was calling up a stroke of deserved wrath from the rod of an angry but righteous Judge. No words of Christ, but, their own conscience told them,

they, also, were criminated and, under the fear of a falling wrath-stroke, they silently slipped away into secrecy !

The widow of Zerephath, weeps at the death-bed of her son ! weeps much for his death, weeps more for her sins, for, in this her hour of adversity, the loud calls of conscience had alarmed her by suddenly calling up the errors of the past, and, amid a flood of tears she cries out to Elijah the Prophet of God “Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance?” Conscience, in alarming colors, rëpicted her former career, and, this, added to the adversity of the hour, filled her with almost unbearable grief !

The sleeping lion, caged in the royal gardens of the east, never rose at the lash of its master’s whip, quicker, or, more fierce, than conscience rises in the time of a sinful man’s distress.

These are the hours, in which, that sin, becomes gall to the palate, which had formerly been rolled as a “sweet morsel under the tongue” for, then, ’tis as Goldsmith says,

Remembrance wakes, with all her busy train,
Swell’s at the breast, and turns the past to pain.

A self-condemning conscience is, not merely, a dagger with which the soul is pierced, but, a dagger deep-dipped in poison, and, the poison mixed with our own hands! Under the stroke of self-condemnation, which is the reproof of conscience, the soul, worries, withers, and, wastes away.

The Pauline affirmation is that all persons are responsible beings, those who have the written law and are enlightened in it and those who have not the written law, for in each there is a spirit-written law sustained by a conscience which in right and truth, bids; in wrong and error; forbids!

The Apostolic-chief terms it "a law written in their hearts, their conscience, also, bearing witness to it." Thus, is the rule of right and wrong, so plainly marked, that, there is no question concerning our life-duty. Conscience; and, not the conscience of the individual only, but, the conscience of the whole human race, speaks so plainly, that, there is no room for any deliberation. The world of mankind is chain-bound by this conscience law written by the spirit of God in the fleshy tablets of the

heart. To the wrong-spirited, conscience ever wears a frown, but, to the innocent and honest, it wreathes itself in sweetest smiles and becomes a genial companion and playmate of the soul. Oh! the delights of a soul, thus, calmed continually, by a good conscience! Like the helpless infant resting on its mother's arms in perfect trust and quiet, so, rests that soul on the arm of God, even though, at times, that arm seems wreathed with lightning.

To an innocent conscience, there are no terrors! To such, even the lightnings are divested of everything which can harm, and instead of flooding the heart with anxiety, and unrest, they shine and charm like flower-beauties, and, play like sun-beams round the soul.

How shall we obtain, or rather, retain such a conscience? Let inspired men, answer! "There is no condemnation to those who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." And where there is no condemnation the soul may expand itself as confidently and lovingly to God's presence and favor, as budding flowers unfold to the sun! yes; to have a

conscience which neither condemns nor accuses in our relation to life's affairs is to have a life full of joy, deep; godlike; and permanent! Experience affirms what holy-writ declares. "If our hearts condemn us not, then, have we confidence toward God," and, "Happy is he that condemneth not himself, in that thing which he alloweth." Obedience to a spiritually enlightened conscience, has lifted weak men up to the highest possible heights of moral grandeur, and efficiency, but, disobedience, to the same strong pleas have hurled strong men from the most exalted eminences of moral beauty, down, to the coldest, and most hopeless, valley-depths of degradation, to which a man can ever come. O! convert, seek ever, seek always, and in all circumstances, to retain *a good conscience*, such as shall be void of offense toward God and man, then, will your life be full of *satisfactory joys!*

One of these days the sun will rise,
But will not rise for thee,
For one of these days, all wrapped
In silent rest, thou'l be
Approaching swift or slow,
None know; Yet each one feels,
Some day, it will be so.

So, do thou strive, through every day,
To do the best you can,
And let *approving conscience* be
Thy whole and highest aim,
That some kind friend may say,
When thou'st laid life's burden down,
“The world is better, that he lived.”
Ah ! This shall be thy Crown !

O ! Yes, Paul ! it is with us, as with thee, our
“rejoicing is this, *the testimony of our conscience*,
that, in simplicity, and Godly sincerity, we have
had our conversation in the world.”

“HOW SOFT THE MUSIC OF THOSE VILLAGE
BELLS, FALLING AT INTERVALS UPON THE EAR,
IN CADENCE SWEET.”

Cowper.

“HEAR THE LOUD ALARUM BELLS—
BRAZEN BELLS!
WHAT A TALE OF TERROR, NOW, THEIR TURBU-
LENCE TELLS!
IN THE STARTLED EAR OF NIGHT
HOW THEY SCREAM OUT THEIR AFFRIGHT!
TOO MUCH HORRIFIED TO SPEAK,
THEY CAN ONLY SHRIEK, SHRIEK,
OUT OF TUNE.”

Edgar A. Poe.



FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, VALPARAISO, IND.

THE VILLAGE CHURCH BELL.

The world is wide and life is long.

 Ah! Much of their good have I seen;
 And here and there is a sight or song
 That will ever in memory keep green.

But in all my wanderings round the sphere,
 On sea or in mountain dell,
No music so sweet hath thrilled mine ear
 As the chimes of our village church bell.

Its call rings out o'er all the place,
 To its 'semblies night and day;
Bidding all repair to a throne of grace,
 There to think, and sing, and pray.

Now; alas! deep sorrow, from its molten tongue,
 Comes mantling with grief each soul,
As it tells, "there hath died some precious one,"
 In slow-measured, deep-muffled toll.

But it merrily chimes to the youthful mind,
 As it rings out those gladdest hours!
When heart-and-heart love's pledge doth bind
 'Midst the altar-twined marriage flowers.

Hark! Hark! its alarm! A fire somewhere!
 Alas! Now, its clang sharp and wild!
And the villagers rush as helpers there,
 To save cottage or home and child.

Thus a friend, indeed! for full many a year,
Our sweet-sounding village church bell
Hath instilled souls with joy or aroused them to fear,
As its peace-notes or fire-warns fell.

O! How years have sped by, ne'er to return,
Leaving many bright stories to tell;
But the sweetest of thoughts stored in memory's urn,
Are recalled by the echoing village church bell.

A harp with a thousand strings may be sweet,
Its strains make the heart heave and swell;
But to reach my soul there is naught so fleet,
As the chimes of our village church bell.

Then Ring out! Village bell; Ring on, evermore!
May thy echoing tones never cease!
Till thy wavelet-like pearls strike the upper shore,
Ushering in the millennial peace.

WEEP FOR THY SIN, THEN JOURNEY ON,
AND KEEP THINE EYE ON HEAVEN.

ROCKS!! ROCKS!! ROCKS! RAPIDS! SANDBARS! SHALLOWS!

These, one or all, will be found somewhere in the long channel of every human life. Against them, if thy soul's craft plunge, or into them if it sails, it will, perhaps, be broken, shattered, or disabled, forever! These spiritual obstructions, are more dreadful in their ravages, more terrific in their ruin, than any of earth's streams, channels, rivers, or oceans, ever saw.

Steer clear of the rocks! To do this successfully, you must have a steady hand; a clear head; an honest heart! and an unfaltering confidence in the God of battles and of storms! Rocks are all about you, and, before you. If they are not there by natural causes, then, they are placed there, by wicked, and, designing hands, whose possessors, would cruelly, yet, gladly, laugh at your downfall, and stumbling, and consequent wreck, and, their brows would grow black with frowns should they discover some heaven-

dispatched angel, commissioned, and sent forth, to raise you up again.

There is but one way to avoid the rocks, and that is to seek guidance from above, and, when "the still small voice" you hear, immediately follow where it leads. There are no rocks on the high seas of holiness and heart purity, but once away from this narrow; deep; and straight channel; we jeopardize the soul's-craft.

The slightest deflection to right or left throws you into danger's track. Outside the channel of God's own marking, danger-rocks are numerous as the night-gems above. Sometimes, in threatening attitude, they rise like sea-gods above the surface of the waves; sometimes, like unseen and silent sentinels they are hidden away beneath the surface and give no sign of their presence till you dash against them and they call a halt.

Once outside the Bible-taught channel of righteousness, rocks; sand-bars; shallows; and, rapids; danger-places to the soul, will be seen in great profusion. O! how many there are between here and

heaven! Look, now, at three of the most familiar, best known because against them more than others, souls have dashed and been crippled or destroyed forever. The first we may call *the Drift-Rock!* for, against this, careless, drifting, souls are most often dashed and dazed. It was towards this rock that Peter was moving when “he followed the Lord afar off.”

As this was the first great mistake of Peter’s life, so, it is the prime error of many a modern Christian life. Widening the distance, by our thoughtlessness, between us and the master! Following afar off, and thus, giving opportunity by your carelessness for a chasm to form, which if allowed to widen, you may, at last, find unbridgable, and thus, resolve itself into a great gulf, which none can cross, and, which no viaduct can ever span.

Neglect of our prayer-hours; irregularity at divine-worship; carelessness in our bible-studies; indifference as to the influence of common conversation! all these are forces which steadily; surely; if not rapidly; drive souls toward the drift-rock!

Look ! at the second rock which for memory's sake and future reference, we may call, *Associate-Rock* !

O ! the almost unlimited power of associations ! Few men rise clear above their associates ! In some degree, all are impressed and influenced by their surroundings. All nature teaches the careful, observant student, that every object in its vast realm is the result of its surrounding, and, that all the life there seen, is derived from its associations. A tree ; a plant ; a flower ; when seen in their beauty and completeness, are but the concentrated results of many small forces about them.

From all these earth, air, moisture, sun, and myriad other minute forces, they derive their character and existence ; in short, they are what their associates make them. The little rill streams plough up and plough out the heart of the mountain, and leave as a result of their running the deep, abysmal, cañons and gorges of the west ! A single rain-drop may bless, and a single lightning-stroke blast, the fairest tree that ever bloomed on earth ! The flower-

ing vine of the latticed porch-way may be trimmed and trained by one little hand, or torn and destroyed by another.

Little influences ! you say ! yes, indeed they are ! and if these smaller forces in nature's realm affect so seriously these greater objects, who shall say but that the ten thousand little influences of your associations will not make or mar your future character. The man Solomon, to whom God gave more riches and honor and wisdom than to any other in the world, declared "A continual dropping weareth the stone," and if the great flinty rock is hollowed out by the dripping rain-fall from the house-eaves, who shall deny that impressions are left upon us by those who surround us and with whom we daily associate. Look well ! to the company you keep ! As the worldly maxim is "We become like those with whom we associate !" and, as the divine record declares "evil communications corrupt good manners" so, all history proves that individuals, as a rule, partake of the spirit and character of their surroundings, and, yet in the face of this threefold warning from the

world, history, and the record-divine. Christians sometimes carelessly associate with those from whom they can gather naught but evil, or, at best more evil than good. Beware! young convert of this dangerous Associate-Rock! Hold the helm-chain of your soul-craft in your own hands and guide thyself carefully, and thus you may avoid the scars and stains which mark always and forever the lives of careless, drifting, souls!

Look! finally, at the third rock or, as we may term it, the *Rock of Denial*! This is the rock reached before the final soul wreck! It is the one against which Simon Peter dashed, when, in the open court, the Jewish damsel jeeringly said, "Thou art one of his disciples." Recoiling from the open-courted fire-place, and wilting under the charge that fell from the lips of scornful beauty, he uplifted his hand to heaven and swore as if on trial, "I know not Jesus!" Then, but not till then did he realize whither he had been drifting; of the power of his associations; and much less did he realize his nearness to the danger-rock-denial, but the crash and jar

of his swift plunge against it, aroused him, and the crowing of the morning watch aroused his drifting; ill-associating; denying soul; and looking at his real condition, he went out, and wept tears of repentant sorrow.

Have you, unwittingly or through carelessness dashed against some one of these rocks, and, are you now suffering the effects of the shock! O! Weep, but weep not forever over this thy wrong, rather rise, and, as much as is within thy power, repair the breach! Mark the rock and move on thereafter, guiding thyself carefully, and thus avoid repeating the wrong, for, *to repeat the wrong is but to double thy crime.*

Boveé, most beautifully and encouragingly says, "A sound discretion, is not so much indicated by never making a mistake, as by never repeating it," and, from the lips of Jesus fell the same idea, at least in inference, when he said to the temple-loving convert, whose health had so lately been restored near the Bethesda-porches: "Behold, thou art made whole, go thy way and sin no more lest a worse

thing come upon thee." The past is forever past, and by you, of it, there can be no alteration ! Though all the yellow-gold of earth's mines were yours you could not bribe the recording-angel, nor, erase from the records a single one of all the indelible pen-lines already written there. Leave then the past with God and look well to the future ! A radiant future is before you if you are willing to apply the lessons learned from a study of previous errors.

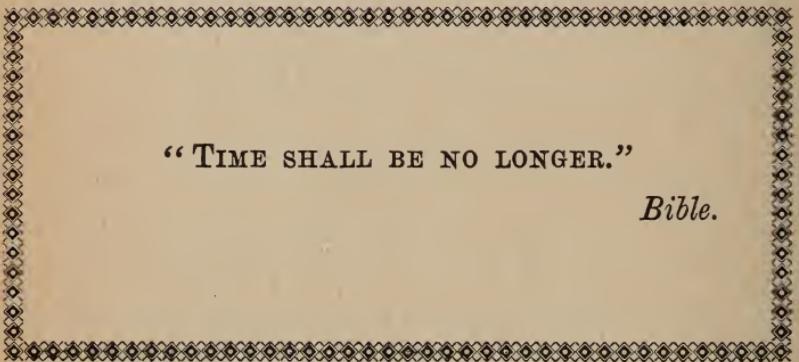
Such a study can not be fruitless if from it you gather the material for future victory and thus by Christ-like movements hereafter, conquer the "prince of the power of the air," and quickly turn the darkness of the past into light for the future. Droop not ! Be not discouraged ! Lift up your head and look into the eyes of your living ; loving ; forgiving Saviour ! who was tempted in all points as you are and while he was "without sin" yet is he touched with all the feeling of your infirmity, and, ready, yea, deeply anxious to succor those in need. Look ! then into the eyes of Christ, and, if you have erred

and are now repentant, read at once as did denying Peter the double message of rebuke and pardon.

O ! With what tender terms is every new-created soul addressed ! The epistles breathe the spirit of Christ ! As applied to young converts, they are full of the most endearing names ! Listen to John, the beloved, as he says : “ I write unto you, *little children*, because ye have known the Father,” because, “ your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake,” and now *little children*, abide in him that when he shall appear ye may have confidence and not be ashamed at his coming ” and, again, “ Now are we the *sons of God* and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him.”

Children of God ! Take counsel from the inspired Paul and if you think you now stand, “ take heed, lest you fall ! ” You are as yet, but “ babes in Christ ” and as such keep in mind that a young child does not walk, but is carried ; does not know, but is taught ; does not think, but is thought for ; does not keep, but is kept ; does not save, but is saved ; does not

tand, but is holden up ; therefore, go through life, leaningly, lovingly, trustingly, and if you will be very child-like to God, He will be very God-like to you ; and the less you are to yourself the more will Christ always be to you.



“TIME SHALL BE NO LONGER.”

Bible.

OLD YEAR AND NEW.

The old year's gone ! Naught can recall !
Its moments, months ! Or hours past !
Its record helps us ! Rise or fall !
'Tis sure to meet us ! First or last !

The old year's gone, swift rolling by
Its clouds and brightness, each
An arch-way forming to the sky,
And richest lessons teach.

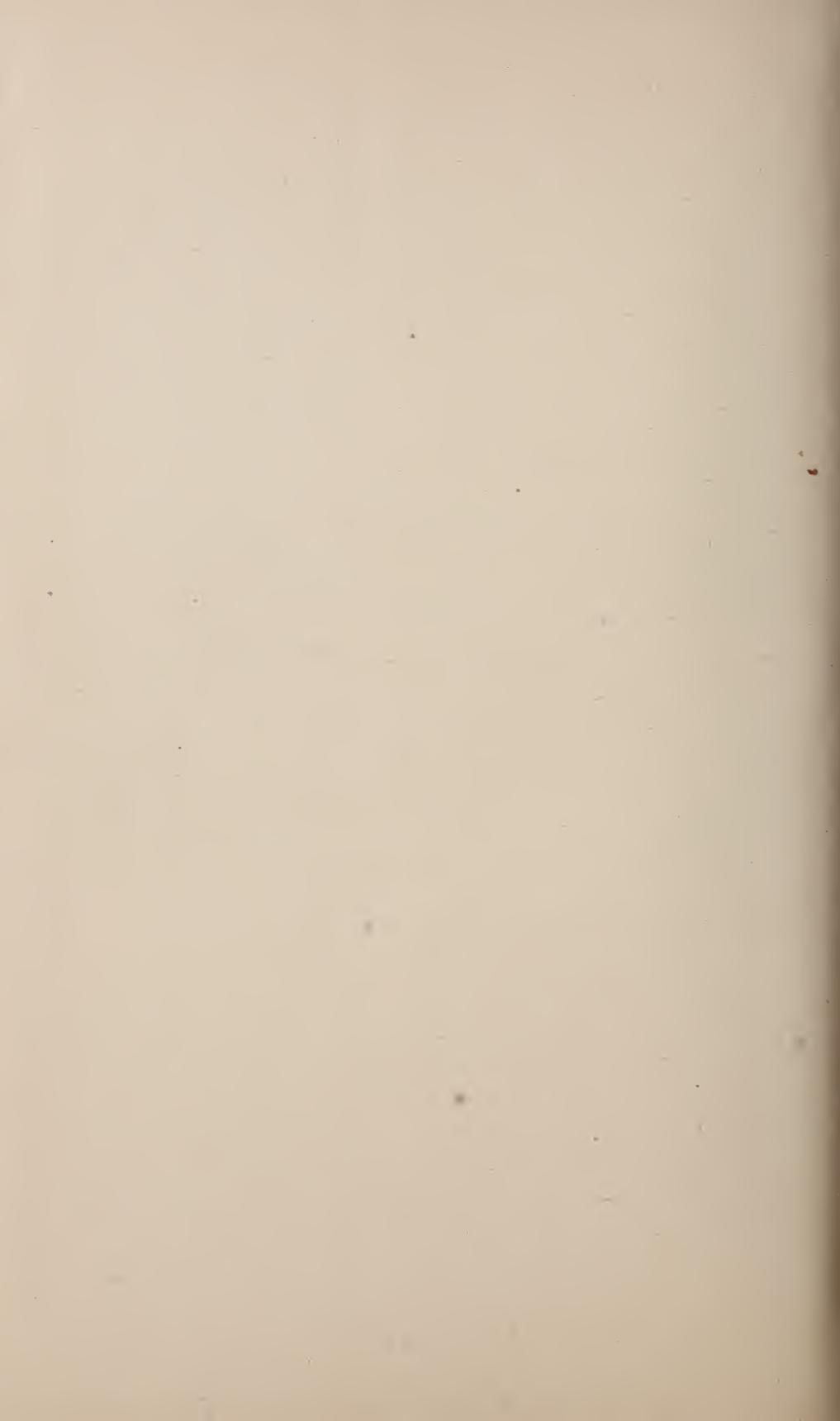
As rain-bow spans the eastern hills
When floods have passed away;
So with the old year's joys and ills,
They came, but did not stay.

The old year's gone! the new year's come!
What thoughts our hearts now thrill;
Some vows are paid; and unpaid, some,—
Their memories haunt us still.

Come, Spirit! Come! Thou angel white!
And carve our names anew!
From this, the last-born new year's night!
Henceforth may all be true!

True, to the cause we love so well;
True, in thy eyes, O God!
Spent and spending thy truth to tell,
Ere we sleep in the cold earth-sod.





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